

NORTH DAKOTA PYS 2020-2023

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I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

This is a unified plan

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

A. ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

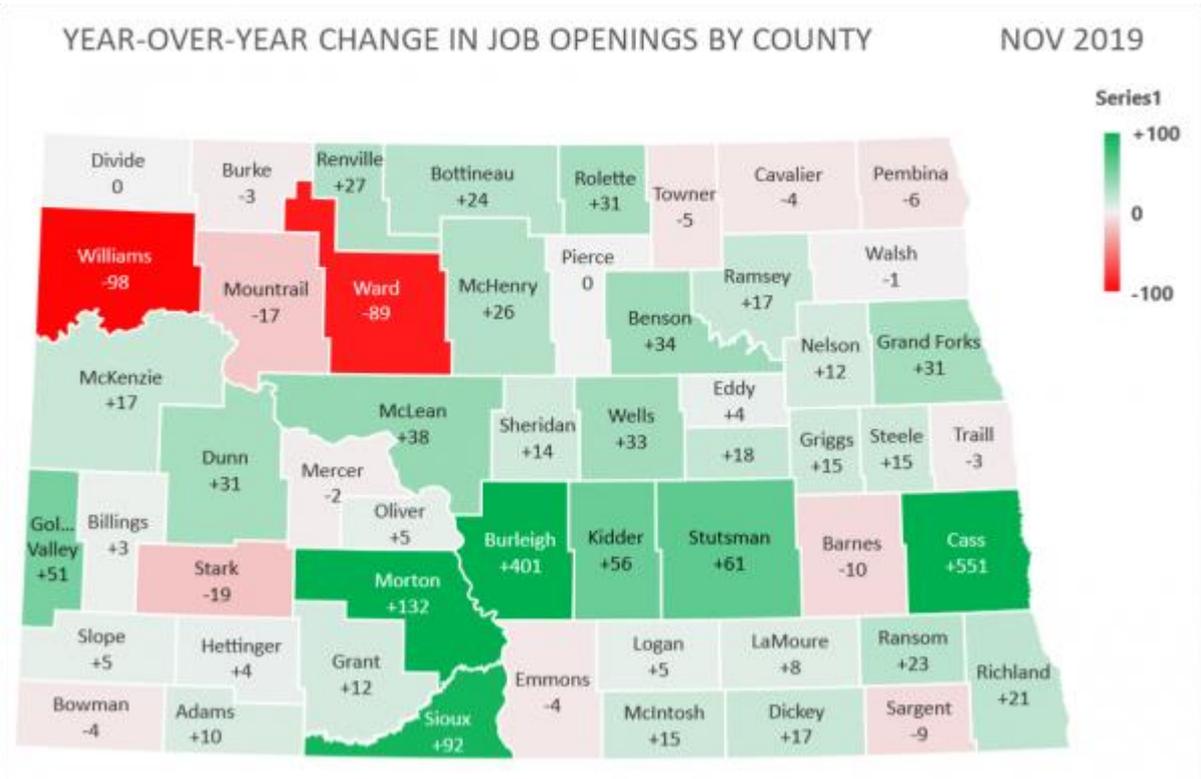
1. ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Over the past 20 years, North Dakota's economy has transitioned from a period of long-term consistency, to a period of rapid growth, to its current state of relative stabilization. Beginning in the mid-2000s, the state experienced dramatic workforce fluctuations following both the Great Recession in the United States (2007-2009) and the oil boom in western North Dakota (2006- 2014). Despite some downturn following the recession, the concurrent effect of the oil boom quickly drove overall employment, wage, and business growth to pre-recession levels and higher. Although North Dakota experienced population growth, an employment surge, and higher wages during the boom, the current economy is continuing to adjust to less (but continued) oil and gas activity, and exhibits slower, sustained economic growth. Because the oil boom sparked rapid economic growth, many industries were affected by both the upswing (2006-2014) and the recent downturn (2015-2017). In 2015, oil and gas activity decreased due to low oil prices, which fell from a high of \$96.26 in June 2014 to a low of \$22.72 in February 2015. Since 2015, oil prices have gradually increased, with an average price of \$60.58 in 2018. As a result, many economic figures initially declined, but have since grown or remained flat, and overall numbers remain high. Employment and wages in industries associated with oil activity still reflect dramatic growth over ten years. And, at 2.4 percent, North Dakota's unemployment rate remains one of the lowest in the nation.

There is some continuity in terms of in-demand occupations. In comparing the average monthly online job openings numbers from 2017 to 2018 some interesting facts emerge. Of the top 10 occupational groups in 2017, those same groups were also in the top 10 in 2018. Along the same lines, Labor Demand Survey results showing all job openings from Q2 2019, indicated 8 of the top 10 occupational groups with the most openings were the same as 2018's online job openings numbers.

Comparing the average monthly online job openings of 2017 to 2018, indicates some interesting facts. The occupational groups in terms of increase from 2017 to 2018 were occupations in Healthcare, Transportation and Sales. Together, these occupational groups accounted for almost 400 more openings in 2018 than in 2017. These increases coincide with the uptick in employment numbers (Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW)), specifically in Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction, and Healthcare.

Over-the-year, counties in the west which experienced heavy growth in the past with oil and gas activity, experienced a decrease. Meanwhile, the central and eastern part of the state saw more growth. Among North Dakota's 53 counties, 36 reported an over-the-year increase in job openings, while 15 reported an over-the-year decrease and 2 remained constant. Cass County reported the largest over-the-year increase in job openings with a change of +551. Williams County reported the largest over-the-year decrease with a change of -98. Cass County reported the largest number of job openings (4,609), followed by Burleigh County (2,324) and Grand Forks County (1,357).

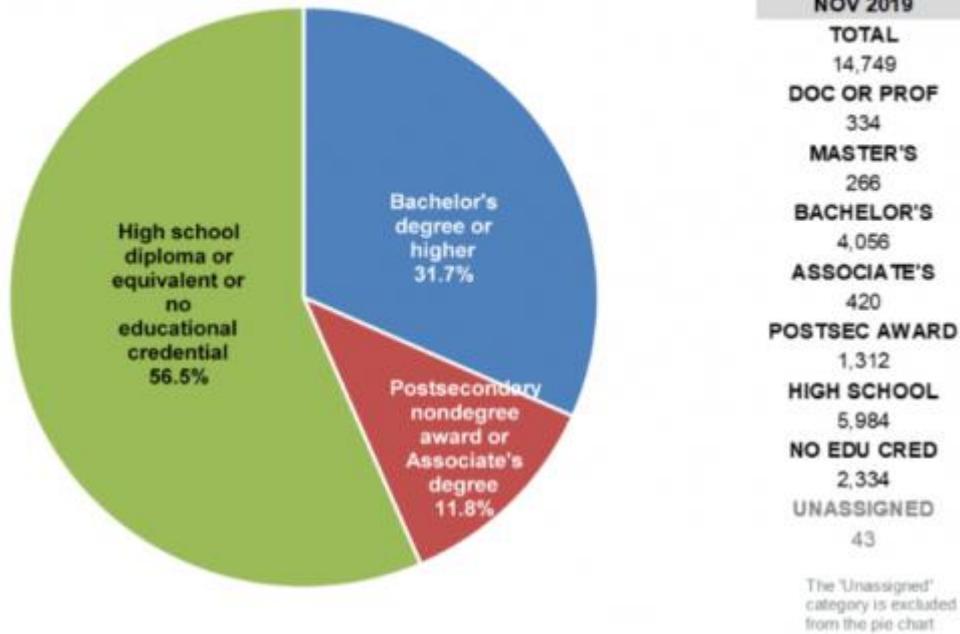


The flip side to emerging demand is decreasing demand. The same analysis from above indicated there are several occupational groups that experienced a decrease in demand from 2017 to 2018. The occupational group with the largest decrease was Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations with 42 fewer openings. This coincides with the decrease on the industry side (QCEW) with employment. The other occupational groups with decreases in job openings were Personal Care and Service Occupations, and Protective Service Occupations. These decreases accounted for 21 fewer openings.

DISTRIBUTION OF JOB OPENINGS BY TYPICAL ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION

[ALL
JOB
OPENINGS]

Typical entry-level education describes the level of education that most workers need to enter an occupation, and takes into consideration advertised education requirement preferences. The Labor Market Information Center is able to assign a typical entry-level education category to most job openings (99.7 percent of North Dakota job openings have been assigned a typical entry-level education category), but some are tagged as 'unassigned' due to missing or incomplete occupational codes.



[Data are not seasonally adjusted and subject to revision. Dashes (—) indicate data not available.]

There is existing demand in a wide variety of occupations. The two-year average of monthly online job openings illustrates this point. All 22 of the two-digit occupation groups were represented in the top 100 of this list (excluding not classified or unidentified occupations). The largest occupation group was Healthcare Practitioners and Technical, followed by Transportation and Material Moving; Sales and Related; Office and Administrative Support; and Construction and Extraction.

SOC Code	Occupational Group Title	Online Openings (2017-2018 average)	2017-2018 Rank
	TOTAL	12,941	
11	Management	745	7
13	Business and Financial Operations	437	11
15	Computer and Mathematical	405	12
17	Architecture and Engineering	352	15
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science	114	21
21	Community and Social Service	171	19
23	Legal	22	23
25	Education, Training, and Library	404	13
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	245	18
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	1,854	1
31	Healthcare Support	386	14
33	Protective Service	134	20
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related	771	6
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	294	17
39	Personal Care and Service	324	16
41	Sales and Related	1,151	3
43	Office and Administrative Support	1,150	4
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	497	10
47	Construction and Extraction	791	5
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	716	9
51	Production	743	8
53	Transportation and Material Moving	1,167	2
55	Military Specific	7	24
	Unclassified	60	22

SOC Code	Occupational Group Title	2017 Average Annual Online Openings	2017 Rank	2018 Average Annual Online Openings	2018 Rank
	TOTAL	12,105		13,776	
11	Management	661	7	829	7
13	Business and Financial Operations	383	11	491	11
15	Computer and Mathematical	341	14	469	12
17	Architecture and Engineering	283	16	420	14
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science	103	21	124	21
21	Community and Social Service	161	19	181	19
23	Legal	20	23	25	23
25	Education, Training, and Library	378	12	430	13
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	222	18	269	18
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	1,800	1	1,909	1
31	Healthcare Support	371	13	402	15
33	Protective Service	135	20	133	20
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related	791	5	750	9
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	272	17	317	16
39	Personal Care and Service	334	15	315	17
41	Sales and Related	1,140	2	1,161	4
43	Office and Administrative Support	1,112	3	1,188	3
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	468	10	527	10
47	Construction and Extraction	728	6	855	6
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	632	8	799	8
51	Production	628	9	858	5
53	Transportation and Material Moving	1,063	4	1,272	2
55	Military Specific	6	24	8	24
	Unclassified	75	22	46	22

The above analysis of emerging occupations is based on the average monthly online job openings from employers for 2017 and 2018. This analysis is limited to job ads posted online, is focused on occupational data, and cannot project into the future.

The Labor Demand Survey provides a more comprehensive measure of total job openings across North Dakota, including those not posted online. Results are from the most recent survey – Q2 2019. North Dakota’s occupational job openings rate for Q2 2019 was 6.7 percent. Twelve of the 22 occupation groups had a job openings rate higher than the statewide average. Due to substantial seasonal demand, the Farming, Fishing, and Forestry occupation group had the highest job openings rate at 24.6 percent. Food Preparation and Serving Related (10.0 percent) and Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance (9.8 percent) rank second and third, respectively. Other occupation groups with higher-than-average job openings rates include Construction and Extraction (9.6 percent), Transportation and Material Moving (9.5 percent), Arts, Entertainment, and Media (9.0 percent), Protective Service (8.2 percent), Installation, Maintenance, and Repair (7.8 percent), Architecture and Engineering (7.8 percent), Healthcare Support (7.6 percent), Healthcare Practitioners and Technical (7.5 percent), and Personal Care and Service (6.8 percent). The effect of seasonal demand may explain why some occupation groups had higher-than average-rates, especially those related to construction, recreation, extraction, transportation, grounds maintenance, and farming.

SOC Code	Labor Demand Survey Q2 2019 Occupation (Top 10 highest number of openings)	Q2 2019 (Apr-Jun) Job Openings
	Total	29,249
533032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,865
412031	Retail Salespersons	1,001
291141	Registered Nurses	913
412011	Cashiers	887
472061	Construction Laborers	825
353031	Waiters and Waitresses	736
311014	Nursing Assistants	706
353021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	679
372012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	589
352014	Cooks, Restaurant	531

The industries with the most job openings were Accommodation and Food Services (4,294), followed by Health Care and Social Assistance (4,159), and Retail Trade (3,446). Together, they account for 40.7 percent of the statewide total. This means that 1 in 4 job openings could be

attributed to restaurants, hospitals, specialized trucking, mining support activities, and accommodations. North Dakota's industrial job openings rate for Q2 2019 was 6.5 percent. Eight of the 20 industries had a job openings rate higher than the statewide average. The Administrative and Waste Services industry had the highest job openings rate at 11.7 percent, fueled by demand from temporary help agencies. Accommodation and Food Services (10.9 percent) and Transportation and Warehousing (9.7 percent) rank second and third, respectively. Other industries with higher than average job openings rates include: Construction (9.5 percent), Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (9.0 percent), Other Services (except Public Administration) (7.5 percent), Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting (7.1 percent), and Retail Trade (7.0 percent). The effect of seasonal demand may explain why some industries had higher-than-average rates, especially those related to construction, recreation, transportation and agriculture.

Employment projections rankings do not necessarily reflect the fastest-growing jobs, but they provide an idea of the industries where there will be jobs to be filled by 2026. For example, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry ranks the highest by far, with an expected increase of 11,626 jobs. Other industries expected to increase coincide with other trends, like rebounding oil prices (the Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction industry is expected to grow by 7,828, or 51 percent) and population growth in North Dakota's larger communities (Accommodation and Food Services is expected to grow by 5,664, or 16 percent). The expectation of these trends driving the economy is similarly reflected in the projections of other growing industries.

SOC Code	Occupational Title	2016 Employment Estimate	2026 Employment Projection	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Total Openings
	Total, All Occupations	480,796	535,585	54,789	11.4	603,194
11	Management	51,568	53,879	2,311	4.5	41,727
13	Business and Financial Operations	18,486	21,225	2,739	14.8	20,065
15	Computer and Mathematical	7,591	8,994	1,403	18.5	6,840
17	Architecture and Engineering	6,811	8,208	1,397	20.5	6,879
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science	3,690	4,019	329	8.9	3,811
21	Community and Social Service	7,494	8,683	1,189	15.9	9,867
23	Legal	3,343	3,677	334	10.0	2,352
25	Education, Training, and Library	23,816	26,200	2,384	10.0	23,315
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	5,996	6,365	369	6.2	6,415
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	25,976	30,610	4,634	17.8	19,648
31	Healthcare Support	13,099	15,041	1,942	14.8	17,716
33	Protective Service	7,261	7,792	531	7.3	8,687
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related	35,658	41,287	5,629	15.8	70,650
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	17,270	19,456	2,186	12.7	25,142
39	Personal Care and Service	21,033	24,581	3,548	16.9	37,006
41	Sales and Related	41,519	44,090	2,571	6.2	61,230
43	Office and Administrative Support	62,388	65,088	2,700	4.3	74,131
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	5,577	5,761	184	3.3	8,594
47	Construction and Extraction	36,071	41,909	5,838	16.2	46,682
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	23,250	26,457	3,207	13.8	26,434
51	Production	23,324	25,549	2,225	9.5	29,122
53	Transportation and Material Moving	39,575	46,714	7,139	18.0	56,881

All of these facts combined indicate that while there has been a leveling off period in North Dakota, there is still an abundance of jobs; more jobs than there are individuals to work them. This implies that there might not be a skill gap in the traditional sense, but rather a lack of eligible employees. In this type of economy employers might have to be more flexible in their hiring requirements in order to get employees in the door and improve their skills with on-the-job training or improve the attractiveness of their job offers with increased wages or improved benefits.

EMPLOYERS' EMPLOYMENT NEEDS With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A) (i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Job Service ND relies heavily on the Business Services staff in the local offices to work with employers in determining what their needs are for recruiting and retaining employees. They work closely with employers, schools, and the North Dakota University System to remain up to date on the most timely and pertinent needs and programs. This is done to develop programs designed to help job seekers and employers attain the tools and education they need to address skills needed in the workforce.

Employers have many needs when it comes to knowledge, skills, and abilities. Anecdotal conversations with employers and individuals involved in human resources have yielded surprising results. Many of these individuals indicate the largest deficiency of employees has been “soft skills” such as showing up to work, being on-time, cleanliness, etc. These skills, they claim, would be universal for nearly every occupation. If true, this would indicate a portion of the labor force is essentially unemployable in any occupation. These skills and abilities are relatively easy to improve upon and once the undesirable behaviors are corrected, gainful employment should be possible.

Anecdotal conversations with prospective employees indicate a frustration with job offerings. Many “entry-level” jobs require 3-5 years of experience to be considered. Many prospective employees have been discouraged by this and have left North Dakota to find employment elsewhere. This, combined with an aging workforce while the economy is simultaneously adding more jobs than there are workers to fill, has created another employment need; available bodies. Many open and available jobs require no prerequisite knowledge, skills, or abilities but rather just need people willing to do the job. In the current economy where there are more open and available jobs than there are individuals actively seeking employment, the “less-desirable” jobs are going unfilled. Essentially, it is a lack of desire rather than a lack of knowledge, skills, or abilities.

A third way to look at the knowledge, skills, and abilities that employers need is to look to O*Net online. O*Net lists the more applicable knowledge, skills, and abilities based on occupation. By comparing the top 10 occupations in terms of 2 year average monthly online job openings some basic knowledge, skills, and abilities appear to be most lacking. In terms of knowledge, ‘English Language’ and ‘Customer and Personal Service’ were the most common. The following most prevalent were ‘Mathematics’ and ‘Public Safety and Security’. In terms of skills ‘Active Listening’ was the most prevalent, followed by ‘Service Orientation’, ‘Speaking’, and ‘Coordination’. In terms of abilities, the top four abilities for the top occupations were ‘Near Vision’, ‘Oral Comprehension’, ‘Oral Expression’, and “Control Precision”.

According to the Labor Demand Survey, employers reported job openings for 615 distinct occupations. The top 3 occupations by labor demand were Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (1,865), Retail Salespersons (1,001), and Registered Nurses (913). These 3 occupations accounted for 12.9 percent of the statewide total. The top 50 occupations by labor demand accounted for 63.1 percent of the statewide total. Most of the top 50 occupation job openings were permanent, full-time, and require little-to-no postsecondary education or prior work experience. Higher-ranked occupations—those with more job openings—were more likely to pay lower wages, be part-time, and require little-to-no postsecondary education or prior work experience.

In terms of these in-demand occupations, there are certain licenses and degrees that are required to gain access to employment. For example, a heavy and tractor-trailer truck driver could require a Commercial Drivers License, a specialized degree is required to be a registered nurse. There are some occupations that simply cannot (or at least through common practice, are

not) learned through on-the-job training and require specialized training to even be considered for employment.

(b) Workforce Analysis.

(i) Employment and Unemployment.

North Dakota has experienced employment decline since 2014. The labor force and number of people employed in the state has continued to decrease while the number of unemployed individuals and the unemployment rate have also decreased. The number of employed decreased from 402,521 to 393,755 (-2.2 percent) while the labor force also decreased from 413,544 to 404,299 (-2.2 percent) over the same time period (2014-2018).

Employment in North Dakota has flipped from a slight female majority among all workers in 2008 to a slight male majority among all workers in recent years. The majority of employment has typically consisted of 25-44 year-olds (41 percent in 2008, 45 percent in 2018).

In 2018, the employment composition was 53 percent Male to 47 percent Female. For comparison, in 2008, it was 49 percent Male to 51 percent Female. Both genders experienced high numerical increases, with a significantly higher increase in male workers.

Since 2008, the proportions among age groups across all industries changed by relatively small percentages. The largest shifts in proportion were among 25-44 year-olds (+4 percent) and 45-64 year-olds (-2 percent). The age groups with the largest employment shares in North Dakota were 25-44 year-olds (45 percent) and 45-64 year-olds (35 percent).

From 2008 to 2018, the most significant increases were those among workers 25-44 year-olds (grew by 32 percent) and 45-64-year-olds (grew by 11 percent). The largest increase by percent was among 65+ year olds (grew by 65 percent). Although this cohort is the smallest numerically, the 10-year growth suggests that aging workers may be opting to remain in or rejoin the labor force rather than retiring.

Over 75 percent of workers belong to the 25-44 year-old and 45-64 year-old age groups. A minority of workers belong to the youngest and oldest age groups because those populations tend to be in a pre- or post-career phase of life (e.g. students and retirees).

The industries with the largest shares of 14-18 year-old workers continue to be the Accommodation and Food Services industry (33 percent) and the Retail Trade industry (26 percent). These industries attract young and unskilled workers because many operate seasonally and rely on part-time, entry-level workers (e.g. retail stores, restaurants, hotels, etc.). Within this age group of workers, worker growth across industries was between -2 percent and +4 percent from 2008.

The largest shares of 19-24 year-old workers continue to be the Retail Trade industry (18 percent) and the Accommodation and Food Service industry (18 percent), though the shares have decreased over the past 10 years. This age group is broken out specifically to observe the effects of the oil boom on young employment, since 19-24 year-old workers tend to have some skill and work experience, and they are most flexible (e.g. willing to relocate, travel, work nontraditional hours). The Health Care and Social Assistance industry experienced the largest growth in share (+3 percent). Within this age group of workers, all other industry shares changed by a figure between -2 percent and +2 percent from 2008.

The industries with the largest shares of 25-44 year-old workers are the Health Care and Social Assistance industry (16 percent) and the Retail Trade industry (10 percent), although employment is more evenly distributed across this age group than in others. The Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction industry had the largest increase in share of workers since 2008 (+5 percent). Within this age group of workers, all other industry shares changed by a figure between -3 percent and +1 percent from 2008.

The industries with the largest shares of 45-64 year-old workers are the Health Care and Social Assistance industry (16 percent), the Educational Services industry (10 percent), and the Retail Trade industry (10 percent). The Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction industry had the largest increase in share of workers since 2008 (+2 percent). Within this age group of workers, all other industry shares changed by a figure between -2 percent and +2 percent from 2008.

The largest shares of 65+ year-old workers continue to be the Health Care and Social Assistance industry (16 percent), the Retail Trade industry (15 percent), and the Educational Services industry (12 percent). Within this age group of workers, worker growth across industries was between -1 percent and +1 percent from 2008.

Highlights gathered from 2018 Census North Dakota data:

- Persons with a disability are more likely to be over 64 years of age.
- Persons with a disability tend to be older than persons with no disability, as 71 percent of persons with a disability were age 65 and over.
- The employment rate of working-age people (ages 16+) with a disability was 35 percent.
- The percentage with a disability who were not in the labor force, was 62.6 percent.

Among the six types of disabilities identified, the highest percentage of individuals with disabilities not working but actively seeking work was for people with a cognitive disability. The lowest percentage was people with a self-care disability.

- The median annual earnings of working-age people with disabilities working full-time/full-year was \$22,548.
- The percentage of working-age people with disabilities with a high school diploma or equivalent was 35.8 percent, some college or associate degree was 32.7 percent and bachelor's degree or more was 16.7 percent.
- Census data for North Dakota indicates there are 4,271 households who are limited in speaking English. The majority speak "Other Indo-European" languages.

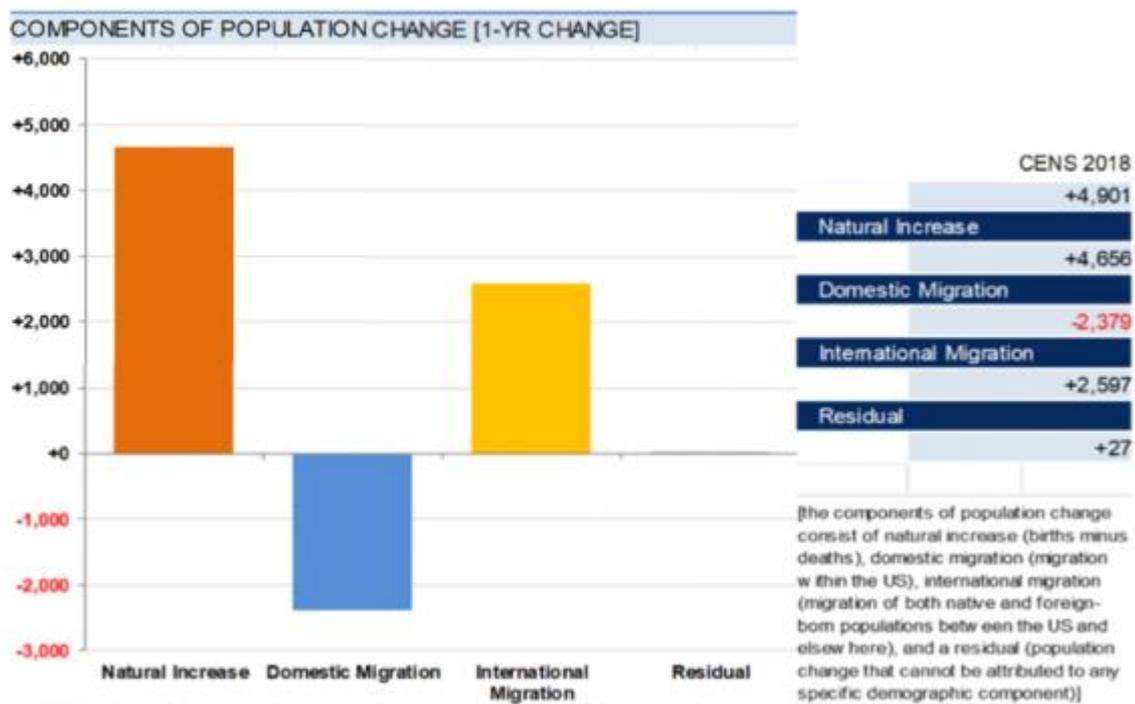
According to the 2018 American Community Survey (ACS), of the 743,793 total civilian non-institutionalized population, 10.9 percent or (80,979) were reported to have a disability. The unemployment rate in North Dakota for individuals with any disability was 5.4 percent. Nationally, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 24.0 percent of persons with a disability were employed. Disabilities include visual, cognitive, ambulatory, cognitive, self-care and independent living.

Of the North Dakota civilian population 18 years and over, 45,135 are veterans. 30.2 percent are a High School graduate, 41.4 percent have some college or Associate's degree, and 22.5 percent have a Bachelor's degree or higher. The unemployment rate for veterans was 2.6 percent, with

an 85.2 percent labor force participation rate. Veterans reporting a disability accounted for 25.5 percent.

Similarly, the number of unemployed individuals in North Dakota decreased from 11,023 to 10,544 (-4.3 percent). The unemployment rate has also fallen from 2.7 percent in 2014 to 2.6 percent in 2018. Overall, these numbers seem to indicate that North Dakota has a large percentage of their labor force employed. This has all happened while the population increased 3.1 percent over the same time period.

From 1998 to 2018, the labor force grew from a total of 349,505 to 404,299 (a net increase of 54,794, or 16 percent). Like the state's population, the labor force grew significantly during the oil boom, and has slightly declined since 2015. From 2006 to 2015, the state's overall population grew by 104,600, while the labor force grew by 51,609. Both datasets illustrate the powerful impact of the oil boom in North Dakota. Since the end of the oil boom, labor force numbers have remained rather flat. This is largely explained by how the labor force is counted—only residents of the state are included. Because many oil and gas workers did not permanently reside in North Dakota, this data only captures a portion of the overall downturn.



Historically, North Dakota tends to have one of the highest labor force participation rates in the nation. After the Great Recession in the late 2000s, North Dakota experienced a small dip from a high of 74.4 percent in 2008 down to 72.6 percent in 2010. During the same time period, the national labor force participation rate fell from 66.0 percent in 2008 to 64.7 percent in 2010. Since then, North Dakota's rate remained relatively flat before decreasing in 2015 and continuing the slow decline through 2018. In the same period, the national rate steadily decreased but has remained relatively flat for the past several years. In 2018, North Dakota ranked second in the nation for labor force participation with an adjusted rate of 69.5 percent, well above the national rate.

For the past decade, North Dakota has had a very low unemployment rate. Like the state's labor force participation, North Dakota's unemployment has historically outperformed the national average. After the Great Recession, North Dakota unemployment reached a high in 2009 at 4.1 percent before steadily dropping to a low of 2.7 percent in 2014. Since then, the rate has remained low, and was at 2.6 percent in 2018. The national unemployment rate reached a high in 2010 at 9.6 percent and has since steadily dropped. In 2018, the national unemployment rate reached its lowest in decades at 3.9 percent. In 2018, North Dakota ranked fourth in the nation for lowest unemployment with a rate of 2.6 percent.

North Dakota's employment has a large seasonal factor to it, a trait which can be seen when looking at the monthly claims data from January 2014 through November 2019. We can also see the effects of the job loss from 2014 to 2016. Looking at the yearly change column we can see that there is a large increase starting approximately February 2015 and running about 16 months until March 2016. However, from January 2017 until May 2019, there was a decrease in the number of unemployed individuals when compared to the previous year for every month.

Month	Total UI claims	Monthly Change	Yearly Change
1/2014	5,666	-19.5%	-4.7%
2/2014	2,712	-52.1%	4.7%
3/2014	1,888	-30.4%	-23.7%
4/2014	2,237	18.5%	-20.3%
5/2014	1,872	-16.3%	-25.0%
6/2014	2,065	10.3%	-3.1%
7/2014	2,163	4.7%	-20.2%
8/2014	1,334	-38.3%	-25.6%
9/2014	1,519	13.9%	6.7%
10/2014	2,007	32.1%	-10.8%
11/2014	4,867	142.5%	19.0%
12/2014	6,434	32.2%	-8.6%
1/2015	6,383	-0.8%	12.7%
2/2015	4,399	-31.1%	62.2%
3/2015	4,251	-3.4%	125.2%
4/2015	4,124	-3.0%	84.4%
5/2015	3,389	-17.8%	81.0%
6/2015	3,657	7.9%	77.1%
7/2015	3,218	-12.0%	48.8%
8/2015	2,368	-26.4%	77.5%
9/2015	2,911	22.9%	91.6%
10/2015	3,086	6.0%	53.8%
11/2015	6,242	102.3%	28.3%
12/2015	8,901	42.6%	38.3%
1/2016	7,994	-10.2%	25.2%
2/2016	5,609	-29.8%	27.5%
3/2016	4,238	-24.4%	-0.3%
4/2016	3,485	-17.8%	-15.5%
5/2016	3,458	-0.8%	2.0%
6/2016	2,765	-20.0%	-24.4%
7/2016	2,863	3.5%	-11.0%
8/2016	2,678	-6.5%	13.1%
9/2016	1,932	-27.9%	-33.6%
10/2016	2,763	43.0%	-10.5%
11/2016	7,171	159.5%	14.9%
12/2016	7,680	7.1%	-13.7%

1/2017	6,880	-10.4%	-13.9%
2/2017	2,707	-60.7%	-51.7%
3/2017	2,304	-14.9%	-45.6%
4/2017	1,733	-24.8%	-50.3%
5/2017	2,416	39.4%	-30.1%
6/2017	2,090	-13.5%	-24.4%
7/2017	2,541	21.6%	-11.2%
8/2017	1,834	-27.8%	-31.5%
9/2017	1,411	-23.1%	-27.0%
10/2017	2,125	50.6%	-23.1%
11/2017	4,991	134.9%	-30.4%
12/2017	5,991	20.0%	-22.0%
1/2018	5,574	-7.0%	-19.0%
2/2018	2,146	-61.5%	-20.7%
3/2018	1,601	-25.4%	-30.5%
4/2018	1,633	2.0%	-5.8%
5/2018	1,542	-5.6%	-36.2%
6/2018	1,585	2.8%	-24.2%
7/2018	1,448	-8.6%	-43.0%
8/2018	1,237	-14.6%	-32.6%
9/2018	925	-25.2%	-34.4%
10/2018	1,523	64.6%	-28.3%
11/2018	3,884	155.0%	-22.2%
12/2018	4,731	21.8%	-21.0%
1/2019	4,049	-14.4%	-27.4%
2/2019	2,048	-49.4%	-4.6%
3/2019	1,352	-34.0%	-15.6%
4/2019	1,477	9.2%	-9.6%
5/2019	1,972	33.5%	27.9%
6/2019	1,424	-27.8%	-10.2%
7/2019	1,685	18.3%	16.4%
8/2019	1,541	-8.5%	24.6%
9/2019	1,194	-22.5%	29.1%
10/2019	2,243	87.9%	47.3%
11/2019	3,590	60.1%	-7.6%

Labor Market Trends:

While it's true that the total number of jobs in the state has grown over this period, the QCEW data also show an interesting trend. QCEW indicates that there was a decrease of 27,080 jobs from 2014 to 2018. This can be directly attributed to the up and down nature of the oil industry as more than 9,000 of the total job loss came from that industry alone, followed by Construction, and Transportation and Warehousing. Average weekly wages were stagnant, increasing less than 3 percent from \$978 to \$1,007. The largest wage decreases were in Real Estate/Rental and

Leasing, Transportation and Warehousing, and Construction. The largest wage increases were in Information, Finance and Insurance, and Utilities.

This trend is further illustrated when looking at Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data for all of 2018 and the first two quarters of 2019. Employment increased 4.9 percent from first quarter 2018 to second quarter 2019, while establishments increased 1.1 percent over the same time period. The largest increases occurred in Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction. The largest decreases occurred in Management of Companies and Enterprises, Retail Trade, and Educational Services.

Industry Employment	Industry Code	1st Quarter 2018	2nd Quarter 2018	3rd Quarter 2018	4th Quarter 2018	1st Quarter 2019	2nd Quarter 2019
Total, All Industries	10	406,762	419,952	419,019	424,578	413,380	426,716
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	11	3,719	4,485	4,938	5,328	3,707	4,439
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	21	19,175	20,718	21,553	21,784	21,401	21,578
Utilities	22	4,024	4,064	4,045	3,801	3,734	3,777
Construction	23	22,302	27,109	30,610	28,181	23,951	29,447
Manufacturing	31-33	25,398	26,002	26,434	26,753	26,327	26,658
Wholesale Trade	42	23,457	24,170	24,018	23,936	23,829	24,599
Retail Trade	44-45	47,142	47,133	46,674	47,468	45,635	45,853
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	18,509	18,848	19,240	19,793	19,529	19,857
Information	51	6,558	6,417	6,393	6,358	6,343	6,338
Finance and Insurance	52	18,067	18,171	18,092	18,134	18,122	18,109
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	5,696	5,765	5,778	5,871	5,779	5,881
Professional and Technical Services	54	16,358	16,664	16,925	16,756	16,723	16,976
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	5,248	5,317	5,289	5,275	3,519	3,551
Administrative and Waste Services	56	13,301	14,096	14,775	13,955	12,820	13,919
Educational Services	61	36,535	35,472	27,194	37,177	37,207	36,091
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	64,322	64,622	64,543	64,657	67,615	68,389
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	9,680	11,241	12,527	10,093	9,587	11,382
Accommodation and Food Services	72	33,699	35,048	35,272	35,002	33,893	35,044
Other Services (except Public Administration)	81	11,458	11,653	11,761	11,707	11,519	11,810
Public Administration	92	22,114	22,957	22,959	22,549	22,140	23,016

Industry Establishments	Industry Code	1st Quarter 2018	2nd Quarter 2018	3rd Quarter 2018	4th Quarter 2018	1st Quarter 2019	2nd Quarter 2019
Total, All Industries	10	31,593	31,851	32,072	32,020	31,668	31,934
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	11	974	983	989	993	978	988
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	21	779	775	787	787	782	784
Utilities	22	177	177	178	180	180	181
Construction	23	3,818	3,812	3,823	3,799	3,664	3,684
Manufacturing	31-33	810	808	812	815	809	817
Wholesale Trade	42	2,796	2,779	2,810	2,797	2,776	2,783
Retail Trade	44-45	3,072	3,092	3,081	3,071	3,030	3,030
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	2,011	2,006	2,020	2,052	2,023	2,044
Information	51	424	417	424	425	427	428
Finance and Insurance	52	1,919	1,938	1,947	1,945	1,922	1,907
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	1,083	1,096	1,091	1,109	1,093	1,109
Professional and Technical Services	54	2,894	2,944	2,988	3,020	2,998	3,058
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	184	181	182	181	182	181
Administrative and Waste Services	56	1,963	2,025	2,082	2,093	2,097	2,123
Educational Services	61	456	466	474	468	472	474
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	2,416	2,451	2,457	2,397	2,374	2,428
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	626	636	639	638	626	632
Accommodation and Food Services	72	2,146	2,164	2,168	2,152	2,107	2,146
Other Services (except Public Administration)	81	2,020	2,073	2,091	2,068	2,027	2,062
Public Administration	92	1,025	1,028	1,029	1,030	1,074	1,075

Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce/Skill Gaps

The education attainment of North Dakota is slightly higher than the nation as a whole. In North Dakota 42.4 percent of the population 25 years and older has a college degree, compared to 39.2 percent of the nation. The category where North Dakota falls behind the nation is in Graduate or Professional degrees; 7.8 percent of North Dakotans 25 years or older have this degree, compared to 11.8 percent of the nation. Overall, these numbers indicate a well-educated workforce in North Dakota.

Highest Educational Attainment (percent of population 25 years and over)	ND	U.S.
No High School Diploma	7.7	12.6
High School Diploma or Equivalent	27.1	27.3
Some College, No Degree	22.7	20.8
Associate's Degree	13.5	8.3
Bachelor's Degree	21.1	19.1
Graduate or Professional Degree	7.8	11.8

Degree Category	2017 Completions	1-Yr Change		5-Yr Change		10-Yr Change	
		Num	Pct	Num	Pct	Num	Pct
Agriculture and Natural Resources	557	27	5.1	171	44.3	206	58.7
Arts	161	-26	-13.9	3	1.9	29	22.0
Biology and Life Sciences	341	-6	-1.7	-26	-7.1	47	16.0
Business	1815	-68	-3.6	-212	-10.5	-128	-6.6
Communications and Journalism	241	-32	-11.7	90	59.6	23	10.6
Computers and Mathematics	369	36	10.8	36	10.8	115	45.3
Education	1194	40	3.5	107	9.8	109	10.0
Engineering	1404	94	7.2	302	27.4	448	46.9
Health	2211	103	4.9	-16	-0.7	422	23.6
Humanities and Liberal Arts	1548	204	15.2	238	18.2	216	16.2
Industrial Arts and Consumer Services	1500	36	2.5	197	15.1	173	13.0
Law and Public Policy	437	6	1.4	-83	-16.0	17	4.0
Physical Sciences	110	-3	-2.7	8	7.8	17	18.3
Psychology and Social Work	617	24	4.0	111	21.9	252	69.0
Social Sciences	192	-29	-13.1	-37	-16.2	-53	-21.6
Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies	116	22	23.4	-20	-14.7	-8	-6.5

Award/Degree	2017 Completions	1-Yr Change		5-Yr Change		10-Yr Change	
		Num	Pct	Num	Pct	Num	Pct
Post Sec Award/Cert/Diploma	1,144	126	12.4	225	24.5	268	33.6
Associate's Degree	2,450	165	7.2	-73	-2.9	139	6
Bachelor's Degree	6,847	99	1.5	645	10.4	877	14.7
Advanced Degree	2,372	38	1.6	72	3.1	581	32.4
TOTAL, ALL COMPLETIONS	12,813	428	3.5	669	7.3	1,885	17.2

In addition to the already high levels of higher educational attainment, there has been a steady increase in the number of program completers in North Dakota institutions of higher learning. Totalling all institutions (2-year, 4-year, Tribal, and Other Institutions) there has been an increase of 17.2 percent from 2007 to 2017; or 1,885 program completers. The total number of program completers in 2017 was 12,813 with the largest share coming from 4-year institutions, accounting for 72.1 percent of all program completions.

The educational attainment of North Dakota's workforce, in addition to being relatively high, is diversified. Four-year institutions reported that 17.9 percent of their program completions were from students majoring in one of three fields of degree: business management and administration; nursing; and elementary education. Most postsecondary program completions occurred at the bachelor's degree level, accounting for 53.4 percent of all program completions. Advanced degree completions have expanded by 32.4 percent since 2007. Most fields of degree experienced gains in the number of postsecondary completions between 2007 and 2017. Only three broad field of degree categories reported ten-year decreases in completions: social sciences (-21.6 percent), business (-6.6 percent), multi/interdisciplinary studies (-6.5 percent). The engineering field of degree category recorded the largest increase in the number of completions over the last ten years with 448, a 46.9 percent increase.

For the 3-year period 2015-2017, 29.8 percent of North Dakota residents ages 25+ reported their highest educational attainment of at least a bachelor's degree. Of those with a bachelor's degree, 26.3 percent also reported attaining an advanced degree. As a proportion of North Dakota's 25+ population, 7.8 percent reported an advanced degree as their highest educational attainment. The proportion of North Dakota's 25+ population with a high school diploma or less is 34 percent. The most popular broad fields of degree for bachelor's degree holders ages 25+ are business or education at 20.2 percent each. Generally, the higher one's educational attainment, the more likely they are to be employed, working full-time hours (35 hours or more per week), and reporting higher than average earnings. Average annual earnings were 30.3 percent higher for those whose highest educational attainment was reported as a bachelor's degree compared to those reporting a high school diploma or equivalent.

SKILL CLUSTERS

Each occupation's experience, education, and job training requirements, as defined by O*NET job zones, are the primary determinants of a skill cluster assignment. After an internal review by North Dakota labor market analysts, 129 skill cluster assignments were modified to better reflect North Dakota's labor market. Therefore, this publication may not match the original O*NET source material. Occupations fall within one of five skill cluster categories outlined below:

LOW SKILL

Low skill occupations need little or no previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience. Some of these occupations may require a high school diploma or GED certificate. Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few days to a few months of training. Usually, an experienced worker could show you how to do the job. Based on O*NET job zone category 1.

SOME SKILL

Some skill occupations usually need some previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience. These occupations usually require a high school diploma. Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations. Based on O*NET job zone category 2.

MEDIUM SKILL

Medium skill occupations require previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience. Most occupations in this cluster require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree. Employees in these occupations usually need one or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations. Based on O*NET job zone category 3.

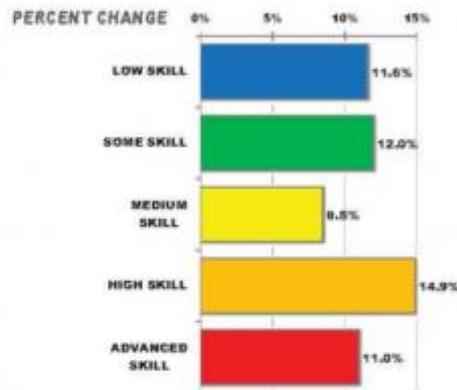
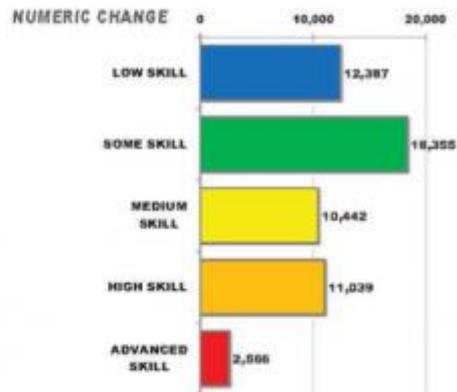
HIGH SKILL

High skill occupations need a considerable amount of work-related skill, knowledge, or experience. Most of these occupations require a four-year bachelor's degree, but some do not. Employees in these occupations usually need several years of work-related experience, on-the-job training, and/or vocational training. Based on O*NET job zone category 4.

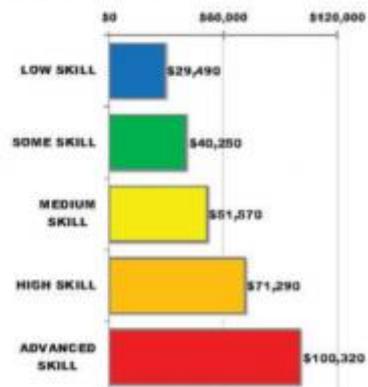
ADVANCED SKILL

Advanced skill occupations need extensive skill, knowledge, and experience. Many require more than five years of experience. Most of these occupations require graduate school. Employees may need some on-the-job training, but most of these occupations assume that the person will already have the required skills, knowledge, work-related experience, and/or training. Based on O*NET job zone category 5.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS 2016-2026



AVERAGE 2017 WAGES

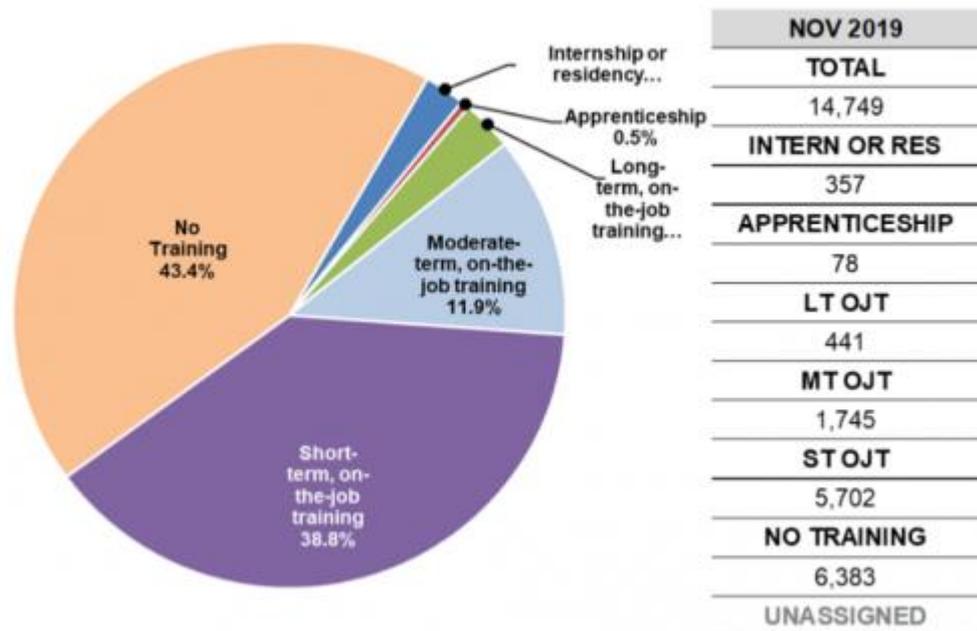


The above discussion of the advanced and varied level of educational attainment suggests a very capable, competent, and skilled workforce. While North Dakota has a quality workforce of capable, competent, and skilled individuals, there is a shortage of available workers. North Dakota's rate of unemployed per job opening was 0.47 in October 2019, the latest month for which North Dakota data are available. One year prior, North Dakota's rate was 0.50. The U.S. rate of unemployed per job opening was 0.77 in September 2019, the latest month for which U.S. data are available. One year prior, the U.S. rate was 0.77. For comparison, North Dakota's

September 2019 rate was 0.56. Among North Dakota's 53 counties, 26 reported a rate less than one in October 2019, while 25 reported a rate greater than one and 1 reported a rate equal to one. Likewise, North Dakota's rate of active résumés per job opening was 0.29 in November 2019. One year prior, North Dakota's rate was 0.37. Twenty-two of 22 non-military major occupational groups reported a rate of less than one, while zero occupational groups reported a rate greater than one and zero reported a rate equal to one. One year ago, twenty-two occupational groups reported a rate less than one. Among North Dakota's 53 counties, 52 reported a rate less than one, while 1 reported a rate greater than one and 0 reported a rate equal to one.

DISTRIBUTION OF JOB OPENINGS BY TYPICAL TRAINING

ALL JOB OPENINGS



All of these facts combined indicate that while there has been a leveling off period in North Dakota, there is still an abundance of jobs; more jobs than there are individuals available to work. This implies that there might not be a skill gap in the traditional sense, but rather a lack of employees. In this type of economy employers might have to be more flexible in their hiring requirements in order to get employees in the door and improve their skills with on-the-job training or improve the attractiveness of their job offers with increased wages or improved benefits.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The North Dakota Workforce System is a relationship of agencies and functions that includes those formal and informal education and training activities. The training provides current and potential workers with new or enhanced knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for successful employment for in-demand occupations being created by North Dakota employers. North Dakota is adapting service delivery in response to a variety of workforce needs. Western North Dakota is responding to the stabilization of the oil prices. Over the last six years the oil and gas industry has changed from hiring “numbers” to hiring a qualified, skilled, and safety-minded workforce. Employers statewide continue to experience a lack of workforce for skilled positions.

As a result of rapid innovation and introduction of new technologies, such as unmanned aerial systems, the workforce system and the education and training system must respond. The availability of qualitative and quantitative economic and workforce intelligence will allow the workforce system partners to rapidly respond to the talent needs of North Dakota business and industry. Upon Governor Burgum taking office, the Workforce Development Council was recognized as a key resource to assist in addressing one of North Dakota's most significant challenges---a workforce equipped with the skills needed to succeed today and thrive and grow in the future. The Council's mission and membership were re-activated and assigned the responsibility to study North Dakota's workforce opportunities and challenges, and with that understanding proposed a path forward.

Focus will be placed on preparing or retraining individuals for in-demand occupations in advanced manufacturing, energy, information technology based, transportation, and health care. However, other WIOA qualifying occupations may be found in the state's in-demand occupations list found at <https://www.jobsnd.com/sites/www/files/documents/jsnd-documents/indemandoccupationslist.pdf>. Analysis of the current and future job market using labor market information, job openings, employer reports to determine skill gaps, and ensuring the necessary training to meet those gaps will be a priority in implementing WIOA Title I programs, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Trade Act and SCSEP funds to serve North Dakota. The strong connection with UI claimants through North Dakota's flexible Reemployment Services Program will provide the impetus for serving increased numbers of individuals and for rapid reemployment results.

Low income individuals receive a variety of services to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency. A customer-focused approach including an initial assessment of skill level, skill development, career counseling/promotion and support service needs for each individual shall be available through the AJC. Job Service ND provides the SNAP E & T services and this allows for partner programs to provide additional services that lead to employment and dependency on social programs.

The Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) is a program administered by Job Service ND through a contract funded with TANF funds. JOBS is provided to TANF recipients living in Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Traill counties. The program provides case management, coaching on a variety of soft skills ranging from problem solving, working with difficult people, child care and scheduling problems. Additionally, job retention guidance, structured status checks, self-evaluation and planning for the next step on the career ladder, job coaching, job performance are provided to the participant. All career services and referrals to training are available to TANF recipients across the state. Job Service AJC's have invited additional JOBS contractor staff to the local offices to strengthen partnerships and to promote and explain all the services available to TANF recipients. These collaborative meetings have been received well and additional co-enrollments are expected to increase in particular with WIOA Youth services.

The Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment (PRIDE) is a program administered by Job Service ND through a contract funded with TANF funds. The program is a partnership between Job Service ND, the district courts, and the North Dakota Department of Human Services, helps noncustodial parents find employment or better paying jobs so they can meet their child support obligations. In addition to increasing child support collections, PRIDE helps increase parent visitation time with children, while reducing court time and reliance on public assistance such as Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Medicaid. Participants in the PRIDE program receive Wagner Peyser career services and referrals to WIOA training. Participants with a disability receive referrals to Vocational

Rehabilitation. Participants who lack a high school diploma or equivalent, are referred to Adult Education.

Because North Dakota WIOA Adult funds are so limited, only low-income or basic skills deficient individuals are enrolled into individual career services and training. Training services are approved for in-demand occupations in North Dakota. Core programs, WIOA Adult (low-income only) and WIOA Youth have collaborated with mutual customers for many years, even before the passage of WIOA. Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Adult funds share training costs through co-enrollment, WIOA Adult (low-income only) and WIOA Youth funds assist with the costs of GED testing for participants enrolled in Adult Education.

Core partner staff are well informed of additional referral sources when encountering homeless individuals seeking employment. Many partner staff are members on their area homeless coalitions and referral contacts. Staff also participate in veteran stand down events to reach out to homeless veterans and offer employment assistance. The First Link 211 network is a resource for a variety of community based services such as food pantries, homeless and domestic violence shelters and clothing. <https://myfirstlink.org/community-resources/>. Connecting homeless individuals with the necessary immediate services will strengthen the effect of the AJC career services.

In collaboration with the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, JSND staff participate in a coordinated effort to assist ex-offenders find employment through the Transition from Prison to Community initiative. Services provided include resume and interview assistance explaining ex-offender status. Information is provided to promote the use of WOTC and federal bonding. During the month of June, there are special Second Chance job fairs offered in our AJC's of Minot, Bismarck, Fargo, and Grand Forks. These job fairs are arranged to connect ex-offenders with employers and employment opportunities. An informational flyer has been created to assist an individual with previous criminal convictions communicate in a job interview.

Based on U.S. Census Bureau data for 2017, 5.9% of North Dakota's population is identified as Language other than English spoken at home. For this targeted population group, Core Partners makes every attempt to ensure the needs of customers with limited English speaking skills are met. New Americans will receive job search assistance, have access to Rosetta Stone software and are referred to Adult Learning Centers for English literacy services. To provide interpretation services in a timely manner, JSND utilizes language identification cards, CTS Language Link interpreting services, free online translation software. All interpretation services are provided free of charge to the recipient. Services are provided in coordination with partners with special programs, such as, the Lutheran Social Services Refugee Program, cultural diversity centers, and the Adult Learning Centers. English as a Second Language classes are provided by Adult Learning Centers. A basic skills class curriculum, funded by PY 13 WIA Incentive dollars, continues to be offered to New Americans and in the Fargo Adult Learning Center. Job Service AJC staff are available as requested to participate in the class and present job search information. The class covers basic work skills to include but not limited to soft skills, basic work math, reading, writing, transportation, interviewing, application process, childcare needs and computers. The class curriculum rotates every six weeks.

In January of 2017, North Dakota began receiving Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) funds. However, after receiving these grant funds for two years, JSND did not reapply in 2019. We felt the conditions of the grant were too stringent for the ruralness of North Dakota. Instead, we have implemented our own reemployment program called Reemployment Services Program (RESEP). This is a mandatory program for all unemployment

claimants who are not job attached and reside in the county where one of our nine AJCs are located. As of this writing, we do not have definitive data if the program is lowering the state's average weekly duration rate. However, during 2018 and the first quarter of 2019 the average weekly duration rate stood at 11 weeks.

Besides JSND's RESEP, Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services to UI claimants. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One- Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the local employer requirements and assist with this online application process.

UI claimants have a series of "How To" instructional videos to assist with the UI claims filing process and weekly certification. The videos are posted on the Job Service webpage jobsnd.com. <https://www.jobsnd.com/unemployment-individuals/unemployment-insurance-how-videos> UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in-demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed. Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities.

Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record and ex-offenders, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews.

AJC staff identify and refer individuals with disabilities who meet the employers' qualifications. In coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation, individuals who are not job ready may receive career services, training and supportive services, including assistive technology, necessary to enhance their marketable work skills. Core program staff are involved in a variety of community and public service clubs and will continue to promote the capabilities and employment of individuals with disabilities. During PY 18, 65.4 percent of all WIOA Youth enrollments were individuals with disabilities; Adult enrollments were 15.1 percent, and Dislocated Worker enrollments were 10.8 percent.

Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. Onsite hiring events and job fairs are posted on the Job Service ND website and other social media platforms. The information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs is available for all core partner staff to assist with employment activity with all program participants. During PY 18, there were a total of 13 multi-industry job fairs spread across the state that attracted over 4,400 job seekers. Additionally, there were 404 hiring events that were held in the nine AJCs. The employers who attended these events indicated through a survey, they would hire over 57% of the job-seekers who stopped at their booths.

In an attempt to promote partner collaboration and meet the current workforce needs and activities across the state, the Adult Education Program supports the industries in demand as determined by the WIB and directs the local programs to provide information to unemployed students/participants about those areas first, and then to the remaining list of high demand,

high need career clusters determined by Labor. Additionally, each local program advisory board discusses local workforce needs and the best methods to meet those needs.

Per WIOA, in addition to offering academic instruction, all programs offer and enroll students/participants in career pathways classes according to their need and interest. This may include career exploration, skill development, career assessment, placement services in concert with partner agencies, integrated employment and training.

THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

The level of support from economic development, education, and business leaders for workforce programs has been consistently strong. There is a healthy partnership at the state-level between the core programs, with strengthening interest from our non-core partners to collaborate, leverage resources and improve outcomes across all programs. Professional staff work tirelessly to remove barriers and maximize resources to improve services to the customer, both the employer and the worker.

North Dakota strives to build partnerships for future workforce needs and opportunities. WIOA core and required programs will enhance linkages between employers, students, parents and schools for shared understanding of workforce needs and opportunities. Efforts will include identifying working situations between education entities and industry to showcase relationships in career training.

In order to assess and analyze gaps between labor supply and demand to provide programmatic offerings, partnerships with economic development leaders will be strengthened to further understand local workforce. Untapped labor pools such as Native Americans, New Americans, Justice Involved individuals, and Individuals with Disabilities. Efforts will be made to expand training and work-based learning opportunities for the mentioned populations through Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education Centers, Job Service ND, TrainND and the state's public, private and tribal colleges and universities. Additionally, and only within the last three months, a special sub-committee was added to the Workforce Development Council. This sub-committee called "Populations with Barriers" was formed to take on the state's challenge of tapping into the labor pools as described above. Although this committee is fairly new, it is studying ways to get these populations into sustainable and meaningful work in ND while breaking down the barriers to employment. This committee, led by Job Service North Dakota's Executive Director, provides a quarterly update to the full council.

Strengthening the use and availability of registered apprenticeships with co-enrollments by all core and required partners will fill a workforce need in the state which has been underutilized in the past. The Department of Commerce applied for and received an Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant. This grant will create a program which helps statewide companies in the state's primary industries and those businesses looking for qualified jobseekers filling in-demand occupations. The program will offer classroom and online training through North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS). NDSCS has a long tradition of providing responsive, accessible, and flexible training solutions that include their current apprenticeship programs. NDSCS has curriculum currently approved with the Department of Labor and will be expanding their offerings to meet the growing needs in healthcare and manufacturing industries.

Because North Dakota is rural, there are limited public transportation options available. The North Dakota Department of Transportation reports that although all counties in North Dakota have transit services, such transportation is for limited time periods for as low as three days per week. Urban centers with fixed routes and paratransit that operate six days per week include Minot, Bismarck, Fargo and Grand Forks. One of the top reasons riders in North Dakota use public transportation is to attend training or employment. These fixed route systems are experiencing budget shortfalls and have proposed limitations to public transportation to include limiting fixed bus routes from 7am to 7pm. Many sectors need employees to work beyond 7:00 p.m. and without public transportation are unable to attract a sufficient applicant pool for available positions.

Residents of rural counties need to travel to more urban settings to receive training and support services that support their efforts to gain employment. Once training is completed these same individuals then need to secure reliable transportation for work opportunities. The lack of transportation is particularly a problem in counties in which reservations are located as they are typically in more isolated parts of the state without fixed route public transportation. Many individuals living on reservations have higher rates of poverty and the lack of public transportation severely limits their ability to seek and accept employment.

Job Service ND has experienced business services staff who are competent in engaging employers to meet their labor exchange needs. The challenge facing Job Service ND is transitioning the employer services to focus on and promote WIOA work-based learning activities. To meet the intention of WIOA, business services staff will need to take a more active role to promote the work experience activities, especially for WIOA Youth. The 20% WIOA Youth expenditure will require a collaborative effort to continue to meet this requirement.

STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

The agencies responsible for the WIOA core and required program in North Dakota include: • Job Service ND (which has responsibility for the majority of the WIOA core and required programs, such as WIOA Title I, Wagner Peyser, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs and Unemployment Compensation Programs) • The Department of Human services (which has responsibility for Vocational Rehabilitation, SCSEP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) • The Department of Commerce (Community Services Block Grant) • The Department of Public Instruction (Adult Education), and • Motivation, Education and Training (National Farmworker Jobs Program)

Job Service ND oversees the nine American Job Centers in the state. The current Job Service AJC's are staffed by 72 staff funded by WIOA Title I and Title III, JVSG, TANF E & T, TANF discretionary and SNAP E & T. AJC Management staff worked and continue to work to outreach to these mostly rural areas. The Job Service ND website (www.jobsnd.com) allows for self-service job search 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from anywhere internet access is available. Jobsnd.com links to the online labor exchange system for individual job search and employer job posting activities. Job seekers can use jobsnd.com to create résumés and conduct automated job searches. Additionally, job seekers can become aware of education and training programs available and view labor market information such as high-demand occupations, current wages and training required. Job seekers can also explore career options, find direction to veteran services, and access community resources.

Each Job Service AJC has a resource area with computers available for individual self-service. Resource area staff promote tools to assist individuals in making career choices such as the RUPReadyND.com, resume writing software, myskillsmyfuture.org, and mynextmove.org. The resource areas also offer a wide variety of printed materials. Resource area staff is available for assist those who lack computer skills to conduct their job search or to file an unemployment insurance claim. Job Service AJC staff assist customers with complex online job applications.

Job Service AJC staff provide the WIOA career services and enroll into training. Resource room staff and case managers are knowledgeable of the services available from the core program partners.

Local partner program staff have been collaborating for many years under WIA and continue with stronger purpose under WIOA.

NDVR operates as a division housed within the state's Department of Human Service (DHS). The North Dakota Department of Human Services operates eight regional human service centers (HSC). Each serves a designated multi-county area, with programs and services to include adult services, developmental disability services, child welfare services, children's mental health services, serious mental health care coordination, acute clinical services, substance abuse services, and crisis and emergency response services. NDVR has regional offices are located in each of the eight HSC regions. In two of the regions, they are co-located with the local Job Service, in two they are co-located within the HSC. Supervision and direction of the rehabilitation staff is provided by staff located in NDVR's State Office. NDVR has developed working arrangements with 17 CRPs and monitors their performance through monthly reports submitted for each individual served and through VR counselor comments and observations of CRP performance and training needs.

Vocational Rehabilitation services in North Dakota are provided through a single Combined VR agency serving individuals with disabilities including consumers that experience a significant visual impairment. NDVR serves individuals with disabilities that constitute or result in substantial barriers to employment. Individuals present with either a single or multiplicity of disabilities that include, but are not limited to alcohol dependency, mental health disorders, learning disabilities, diabetes, deafness, amputation, and traumatic brain injury. NDVR provides services such as counseling and guidance, assessment, vocational training, post-secondary education, transportation, personal assistance services, and job placement. Through customer informed choice and in partnership with their VR counselor, individuals with disabilities are able to create an individualized plan for employment, maximize their potential, and reach the goal of competitive integrated employment. Service identification is determined through a comprehensive assessment of the individual needs and interests based upon vocational goal selection. Comparable benefits are sought prior to the expenditure of program funds for nonexempt services.

The VR agency also provides more specialized services to individuals with significant targeted to their specific populations. For example, the NDVR provides a myriad of educational and training programs such as the Blindness Skills Training, Assistive Technology Training, and Low Vision Services to individuals that experience significant vision loss. Specialized technical assistance and training support is provided to provide Supported Employment to individuals with the most significant disabilities that result in competitive and integrated employment. DVR takes very seriously its responsibility to provide high quality services to all individuals with a disability. DVR has forged a strong relationship with agencies such as the North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind, the North Dakota School for the Deaf/Resource Center for the

Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Community Rehabilitation Programs that provide service to individuals with Intellectual Disabilities.

Forty full time VR counselors are employed by the division with their offices located in the eight larger communities in the state. These VR counselors work closely with staff from JSND and the Adult Education Programs located in these same communities. Staff and fiscal resources are leveraged by all three agencies to provide workforce service to the business community, individuals with disabilities, populations receiving state economic assistance to include TANF and New Americans. NDVR is currently operating in an approved Order of Selection with all categories open. Increased operating and cost to provide case service will result in the agency potential to close up to two categories during the life of the Unified Plan.

The Adult Education program is part of the ND Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Adult Education receives federal and state funds to provide academic and career related skills to eligible participants. Additionally, the Adult Education system offers the same services to students who are unable to speak, read, write or comprehend the English language and works to reduce barriers to employment, community participation and family literacy. Under WIOA, ND Adult Education held a formal competition for local programs in December 2016; upon completion of the RFP process in accordance with guidance from OCTAE, eight (8) regional adult learning centers were awarded funding to provide services. The ND Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) applied for and was awarded funding, under WIOA, to provide services within correctional education. The Fargo Adult Learning Center applied for and was awarded funding to provide Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) under separate WIOA funding. Adult Education provides career services and refers for training enrollment when applicable, as all staff have been provided information and knowledge of the services available from core program partners. Local partner program staff have been collaborating for many years under WIA and continue with stronger purpose under WIOA.

Eligible participants can improve their technology and computer skills by using a variety of different programs, i.e. Microsoft Digital Literacy. Topics include computer basics, the internet and world wide web, productivity programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access), as well as essential digital literacy skills necessary for success in the workplace and college.

Performance is validated through onsite monitoring of local programs, data audits through the statewide student management systems.

B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

1. Vision:

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

Doug Burgum took office as the 33rd governor of North Dakota on December 15, 2016. This was his first run for political office. During his first year in office, Governor Burgum established a strong cabinet team, laid the foundation for his vision for North Dakota, and outlined five strategic initiatives, all of which connect to workforce.

Burgum brings a business leader's approach to diversifying the economy, creating 21st century jobs, and revitalizing our main streets. During his State of the State speech in January of 2018, Burgum articulated his vision for the state:

“Our administration is adopting a purpose statement and that purpose statement is simple. Six words. Empower people, improve lives and inspire success.”

Governor Burgum maintains a people-centric philosophy and demonstrates this through the five “cultural aspirations” that were created through a collaborative process that engaged his cabinet and extended leadership teams across the state. These five cultural aspirations include:

1. Work as One -We understand that diverse teams working together across divisions and departments can bring all of the resources of our state to serve our citizens best. Being inclusive and sharing information provides a better outcome and is crucial to innovation.
2. Citizen Focused -We strive to deliver the best service, with the right balance between technology and citizen facing time. With simplification at the core; we listen, design, create and deliver with citizens at the center of our work.
3. Growth Mindset - We are curious. We learn from each other, finding the genius in what’s been done, eager to improve upon it. We feel supported and have courage to take risks with accountability, learning and applying the learning as we move ahead.
4. Make a Difference -We are focused on the impact of each activity, program and interaction using data and analytics to identify priorities and measure outcomes. Continually striving for improvement and impact, effort alone does not equal success.
5. Leadership Everywhere - We lead by example, promote team spirit and hold ourselves and others accountable. We have gratitude, empower each other and view failures as learning opportunities. We are humble, transparent, focused, and trustworthy.

In addition to these cultural aspirations, Governor Burgum has declared five strategic initiatives, all of which relate in some way to North Dakota’s workforce plan:

1. Reinventing Government: Changes in technology have challenged existing approaches and systems providing an opportunity for reinvention by embracing technology and building a strong workforce and economy. During the past year, there have been continued efforts to unify services, develop employees, and have more cross-agency collaboration. Additionally, the Governor supported the K-20W initiative, a statewide collaboration of public and private sector partners committed to providing resources and training to teachers, administrators, and students about technology. This effort will make North Dakota the first state in the nation with integrated cybersecurity and computer science K-12 standards.

2. Transforming Education: Governor Burgum has made significant commitments to ensure that North Dakota’s educational system connects directly to the development of a 21st Century workforce.

First, in September 2017, Governor Burgum created the Innovative Education Task Force to underscore North Dakota’s commitment to leading the nation in innovative education. The Innovative Education Task Force was made up of education, youth development, business and community leaders. The task force was charged with creating a system to identify and support schools and districts implementing innovative practices, and with providing direction on how state government can empower districts to adopt student-centric learning practices designed to support a 21st century economy impacted by rapid technological change. The task force endorsed policy recommendations in the following areas: flexibility regarding graduation requirements and personalized pathways within education; holistic student support; development of innovation tool kits to support districts exploring student-centered learning

practices; better aligned accountability assessments; wrap-around supports for educational entities outside of individual school districts; incentive innovation funding, grounded in teacher leadership; communication strategy and feedback solicitation in an effort to better educate community members on the needs of today's learners; collaboration with higher education; data synthesis within school districts; and disseminating proficiency scales. Since the release of the task force's report, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction rolled out the North Dakota Choice Ready criteria for graduation, which emphasizes personalized pathways and calls for students to meet the requirements of two of three categories: post-secondary ready, workforce ready, and/or military ready.

Further preparing North Dakota students to excel in the 21st century workforce are statewide efforts in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Governor Doug Burgum and state Superintendent of Public Instruction Kirsten Baesler applaud the Presidential Memorandum aimed at expanding access to STEM education and recognizing the important role it plays in developing a new generation of citizens contributing to the American economy. In 2018, North Dakota hosted a statewide Hour of Code event sponsored by the State of North Dakota, local education leaders and schools, and Microsoft. More than 6,000 students participated at nearly 100 schools. Although this annual event began in 2013, the 2018 Hour of Code marked the first time a state has hosted a simultaneous Hour of Code in K-12 and higher education institutions. North Dakota also invested in a 100-gigabit upgrade to the state network, which has increased connectivity and expanded opportunities for innovation within North Dakota schools.

Finally, in November 2017, Governor Burgum signed an executive order creating a task force to assess the existing governance structure for higher education in North Dakota and determine if changes are needed to ensure the system meets the state's educational and workforce needs in the 21st century. From an applicant pool of 230 citizens, the governor appointed 15 members, representing the interests of students, faculty, the business community and all branches of state government to serve on the Task Force for Higher Education Governance. "Building a 21st century workforce and economy requires us to examine our current approach to higher education, including how our 11 public colleges and universities are being governed and whether the system is operating to its fullest potential," Burgum said. In December 2018, the task force released a report in which it recommended a new governance structure consisting of three boards meant to hold institutions more accountable as they meet the needs of their students. Although this recommendation did not pass in the 2019 Legislative Assembly, preparing post-secondary students for a 21st century workforce remains a priority for North Dakota.

3. Tribal Partnerships: Governor Burgum is committed to promoting greater understanding of North Dakota's Native American tribes and has highlighted opportunities for collaboration between state and tribal governments. In January of 2018, he convened a first-of-its-kind conference on strengthening government-to-government partnerships and relationships. Topics discussed during the conference included treaties, federal partnerships, urban Native American issues, workforce development, child welfare, law enforcement, tribal consultation, energy, historic preservation, sovereignty and governance. Governor Burgum understands that the well-being of North Dakota tribal communities equates the well-being of the state. Mark Fox, chairman of the Mandan, Arikara and Hidatsa Nation, said tribal leaders had long struggled to build a bridge between tribes and the state. He and other tribal leaders commended Governor Burgum for making tribal engagement a priority and for encouraging communication and understanding. "You have to understand where you come from or what has happened so you can change where you want to go," Fox said. Since this initial meeting in 2018, a second has

been held and the interim Tribal Taxation Issues Committee, which is chaired by Governor Burgum, has laid the groundwork for tax revenue-sharing legislation.

4. Behavioral Health and Addiction: Recognizing that behavioral health and addiction impact the state's ability to achieve its vision, including but not limited to the impact these issues have on the workplace, within a month of taking office, Governor Burgum and First Lady Kathryn Burgum brought together health professionals, tribal leaders and others from across the state to discuss a collaborative approach to facing addiction in North Dakota communities. In January 2018, Governor Burgum signed an executive order creating the Office of Recovery Reinvented to promote strategic and innovative efforts to eliminate the shame and stigma associated with the disease of addiction. The Office of Recovery Reinvented is comprised of a seven-member advisory committee, chaired by First Lady Kathryn Burgum. In partnership with the Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division, The Office of Recovery Reinvented is pursuing key strategies as part of the governor's Behavioral Health Initiative. These strategies include: supporting the full continuum of care, embedding services close to home and people's natural supports to keep families together, and to stop criminalizing behavioral health and divert criminal justice involvement. The Office of Recovery Reinvented collaborates with executive branch agencies, advocates, volunteers and others on various initiatives, pursuing opportunities to launch cost-effective, grassroots efforts that increase education and awareness of addiction. For example, in March 2019, the Office of Recovery Reinvented launched the Youth Ending Stigma (YES) Challenge, which is designed to enable student-led initiatives and projects focused on eliminating social stigma surrounding behavioral health issues including addiction and mental health conditions. In addition to hosting an annual behavioral health conference, the Office of Recovery Reinvented also hosted the first-ever Peer Support Day at the Capitol, which brought behavioral health advocates, peer support specialists, individuals who have received peer support services, behavioral health and health care providers, state and local decision-makers and others together to discuss the approach and benefits of peer support and the role that it plays in recovery. Governor Burgum has linked this initiative to that of reinventing government by stating, "To reinvent government, we must comprehensively reinvent how we approach the disease of addiction. The Office of Recovery Reinvented will help catalyze our strategic efforts to strengthen recovery services and eliminate the shame and stigma of addiction."

5. Main Street Initiative (MSI): Finally, Governor Burgum's "Main Street Initiative" is an effort to preserve the health and vitality of North Dakota's more rural communities by empowering local leaders and communities to help attract 21st century workforce and compete in the global economy.

The MSI has three components, all of which directly or indirectly relate to the state's workforce plan: First, smart and efficient infrastructure — Governor Burgum believes that building smart, efficient infrastructure starts by examining the full costs, return on investment, and sustainability of our growth patterns, including all parts of North Dakota, from large metro areas to small towns. The basic premise of this pillar is that the creation of mixed-use city centers and neighborhoods maximizes existing infrastructure, which is a clear economic benefit for taxpayers. This strategy of infilling existing spaces with diverse retail and housing opportunities reduces long-term costs for city government, benefits tourism and business and fosters the kinds of creative spaces, arts and culture that attract people of all ages.

The second pillar of the MSI is the creation of healthy, vibrant communities. Governor Burgum acknowledges that in order to attract and retain quality talent, North Dakota needs to create

cities with vibrant cores, and that these unique places and spaces become the differentiator that helps lead to healthy fiscal — and physical — communities.

The third pillar of the MSI is a 21st Century Workforce. North Dakota's economy is changing, and, now more than ever, a skilled workforce is vital to the success of any company — big or small. In industries like energy, agriculture, healthcare, unmanned aerial systems, biotech, cybersecurity, manufacturing and engineering, Burgum states, we are seeing the emergence of new solutions built on innovative ideas.

With these cultural aspirations and strategic initiatives to guide our work, Governor Burgum's vision for workforce development in North Dakota will result in a plan that: 1) identifies what matters most, with targeted, actionable goals accompanied by measurement and accountability systems; 2) acknowledges that tackling this issue requires collaboration across many state agencies; and goes beyond what has been done, and 3) demonstrates a new and innovative approach to thinking. Aiding in the success of the MSI have been the launch of the Main Street Community Dashboard, which serves as a resource for community leaders who are spearheading MSI efforts within the 66 communities engaged in the initiative; the expansion of community development activities and more than \$2.3 million in funds made available for these programs; and the implementation of the annual MSI Summit, which brings community members, students, and state team members together to learn about strategies and resources necessary for successfully managing the MSI throughout North Dakota.

Governor Burgum's enthusiasm for the future is captured by his final comment in his January 2018 State of the State address: "The State of the State is one of unlimited promise and potential, provided that we embrace change, we diversify our economy, and we harness the unstoppable forces of technology. "

2. Goals

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the above analysis of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

1. Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers of employment* and other populations.*

2. Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

The Unified State Plan provides focus on integrating the Governor's vision for job creation for emerging careers in the fossil fuels and renewable energy sector, healthcare sectors, advanced manufacturing sector, value-added agriculture, transportation and information technology sector. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will support training opportunities for public assistance clients, low income individuals, veterans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, and American Indians.

Governor Burgum has acknowledged the persistent workforce shortage remains the number one gating factor for economic growth in North Dakota. During his state of the state address in January 2019, he stressed the need to redouble efforts to meet this challenge.

"Our state is ready to go to the next level because of the tremendous progress made in the last two years," Burgum said. "Our forward-looking agenda is focused on solving our workforce challenges, increasing accountability and budget transparency, investing in our people, and investing in our future."

The Governor's commitment to addressing these challenges was partially captured in the state's budget, including:

- Support for reform to the state's occupational licensing
- Support for state and private sector partnerships to recruit and retain healthcare workers
- Incentives for organizations dedicated to promoting job development and economic growth
- Creation of a tribal college workforce grant to develop certificate- or degree-based training programs
- Reinstatement of the work automation credit
- Support for skilled workforce scholarship

The Workforce Development Council is also committed to addressing the workforce challenges and acknowledges that while the report establishes the framework for the future, it is necessary for education, state workforce resources, and private industry to connect, coordinate, and collaborate to take the understanding of the workforce issues and create actionable plans for future legislative sessions. In furtherance of this vision, in 2019, the Council created subcommittees to create needed strategies in three main areas from the original report: 1) Recruiting and retention of workers; 2) Addressing opportunities for the populations with barriers to employment; and 3) Focusing on the career exposure and technical skills gap.

Job Service North Dakota, the state agency designated by the Governor as the WIOA Title I Fiscal Agent, Grant Subrecipient and State Administrative Entity, and also serves as the One-Stop Operator as designated by the Council, has also reinvigorated its commitment to meeting workforce needs by creating a strategy aimed at improving the customer experience and collaborating with workforce partners throughout the state. Specifically, the following initiatives have been created to drive the agency mission of *Meeting Workforce Needs* which align with the Governor's strategic initiatives:

- Revamping the agency website aimed at delivering exceptional service and creating a skilled workforce;
- Improving the presence of labor market information for job seekers and employers through social media, promotion of dashboards, and increasing community presentations;
- Identifying areas of business process improvement and opportunities to leverage technology to better serve both employers and job seekers;
- Improving business support and workforce connections;
- Supporting online business registration in a collaborative effort with other state agencies;
- Identifying workforce partners for colocation to better serve the customer; and
- Focusing on efforts to transform the workplace culture, believing that an engaged workforce will enable improved service to the customers.

North Dakota's workforce challenges are many, and there is statewide commitment from cabinet leaders to collaborate and connect to continue forward movement and action to advance the efforts of addressing North Dakota's complex workforce challenges.

The North Dakota Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development, developed and implements a system of performance and accountability measures for the state around workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction. Each workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction partner cooperates in providing the data necessary to implement these measures as pursuant to NDCC 54-60-19. The Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development shall consider these reports in preparing the Consolidated Biennial Statewide Strategic Plan for the state's system for workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction. In addition, before November first of each even-numbered year, the Department of Career and Technical Education, Job Service North Dakota, the Department of Commerce, Department of Public Instruction, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Board of Higher Education shall present their agencies' workforce-related budget initiatives for the upcoming biennium, including alignment of their initiatives with the Consolidated Biennial Statewide Strategic Plan, to the North Dakota Workforce Development Council. The North Dakota Workforce Development Council (the Council) members shall consider potential areas for collaboration.

Since November of 2017, the Workforce Development Council has worked to deeply understand North Dakota's workforce challenges, including but not limited to, commissioning regional economic impact and labor availability studies, partnering with the Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce to conduct the first-ever employer survey, and interviewing dozens of stakeholders across the entire state for the purpose of proposing a workforce plan that identifies priorities based on a data-driven understanding of North Dakota's workforce challenges, maximizes state and federal resources, and aligns the educational system with industry needs to drive and create actionable solutions.

The Workforce Development Council approaches establishing workforce priorities and goal outcomes based on impact versus activity. According to the National Governor's Association, most states take an uncoordinated approach to workforce strategy. The Workforce Development Council uses data and evidence-based approach to creating strategy through a priority focus rather than a program focus.

North Dakota's workforce challenges are many, and there is statewide commitment from cabinet leaders to collaborate and connect to continue forward movement and action to advance the efforts of addressing North Dakota's complex workforce challenges.

In October of 2018, the Workforce Development Council presented a report of 38 recommendations to Governor Burgum in the following categories: addressing the technical skills gap, the need for youth engagement and earlier and more diverse career exploration, nursing and healthcare technician shortage, support for populations with barriers to employment, and the need for net in-migration of North Dakotans.

Underutilized populations were considered as solutions for the State's workforce shortages when determining goals and priorities in the Council's report of recommendations. Aligning resources and partnering with other State Agency efforts such as the Department of Corrections, TANF and Adult Education services for English Language Learners, Native Americans and individuals struggling with addiction will continue to be given strong consideration as the

Council moves forward in developing future strategies. Goals will be formed with consideration on what drives the economy and supports the Governor's Vision.

The Council has created subcommittees in order to address workforce challenges within each of the themes mentioned above, with the addition of two subcommittees which are currently being created and are dedicated to educating citizens and stakeholders throughout the state on the initiatives developed by the Council and occupational licensing reform. All recommendations and projects proposed by the subcommittees must follow the guidelines Governor Burgum's established for the Council to follow in the Strategic Planning process, which are: • The Plan is based on a thorough understanding of North Dakota workforce needs, supported by data and evidence • The Plan maximizes state and federal resources • The Plan emphasizes industry-led solutions • The Plan includes matching educational needs with workforce needs.

GOVERNOR'S VISION FOR YOUTH

The Workforce Development Council's recommendations under the theme calling for youth engagement and earlier and more diverse career exploration, highlight the Governor's vision for youth and the direction in which North Dakota is headed. The following section expands on this section of the Council's report.

CAREER EXPOSURE/AWARENESS. Today, early exposure to career options for students (and their parents) is limited, with students and parents alike generally lacking awareness of available post-secondary degree pathways beyond the four-year degree. In addition to inadequate exposure to the wide array of career options available in North Dakota and the pathways to achieve them, youth in North Dakota do not have sufficient opportunities for work-based learning, which accelerates success in any career. Finally, there is great opportunity to engage youth in the success of their own communities while amplifying efforts to expose students to the wide array of career options in North Dakota.

North Dakota has an opportunity and necessity to become a leader in engaging youth earlier and creating a consistent and integrated approach to career exploration, accompanied by efficient, high-quality educational pathways to assist in educating youth in current and high demand jobs available in our state. Accomplishing this necessitates tighter alignment to North Dakota's educational systems (PK-12, CTE, NDUS) and other delivery systems such as the Center for Distance Education (CDE), and must be supported by leadership and investment from the private sector.

To achieve the goal of creating earlier opportunities for earlier career exposure:

1. The Council recommends building on the current "choice ready" model by implementing specific career exposure courses and other active experiences beginning in middle school, built in partnership with private industry.
2. The Council recommends developing a systemic and consistent approach to incorporating student career planning discussions in parent/teacher conferences beginning in middle school.
3. The Council recommends adjusting the school funding to reinforce support for, and require evidence of, these important practices.

WORK-BASED LEARNING. Work-based learning experiences, such as job-shadowing, internships, co-ops, apprenticeships, and volunteer service provide mutual benefit to employers and student-employees. Student-employees gain valuable real-life exposure and experience to a career, in addition to, school credit and/or pay. Employers benefit through the contributions made by the student-employee and the opportunity to influence future career choices.

Connection to real work experience as a student also addresses concerns raised by North Dakota employers in the 2018 North Dakota Workforce Survey, including employees lacking the basic work-readiness skills that could be acquired through these work-based learning programs.

4. The Council recommends the Workforce Development Council work collaboratively with North Dakota's major business and labor organizations (Greater North Dakota Chamber of Commerce, North Dakota Petroleum Council, General Contractors and Manufacturer's associations, local chambers of commerce, etc.), the K-12 system and NDUS to increase work-based learning opportunities, and the K-12 system and NDUS collaborate to develop consistent, corresponding structures to award credit toward graduation for these experiences.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT. It has been shown that empowering youth by creating the opportunity to participate in the community benefits development as leaders, and specifically, contributes to better problem-solving and decision-making skills when compared to those youth who are not engaged. Similarly, it has been reported that youth who have been empowered by the community are likely to be future community leaders. The development of such vital skills (e.g. problem solving and decision-making) at a young age will serve the youth well in a variety of life endeavors, with an additional and important advantage—exposing youth to the many opportunities available in their own communities may well encourage youth to remain in those communities.

Encouraging youth engagement in the labor force also responds to a concern raised by North Dakota employers in the 2018 North Dakota Workforce Survey, that is, the absence of work ethic, dependability, and problem-solving skills—all of which would be enhanced through earlier work experiences. Further, employers and industry groups have consistently emphasized a need for educational programs to include work-based learning experiences at an earlier age. Though this need has been emphasized, almost one-third of hiring managers are not targeting youth at all.

In December 2018, the Innovative Education Task Force (IETF) released a report of based on their study of innovative education in North Dakota and the opportunities that exist within the state. The IETF was made up of education, youth development, business and community leaders. Governor Burgum charged this task force with creating a system to identify and support schools and districts implementing innovative practices, and with providing direction on how state government can empower districts to adopt student- centric learning practices designed to support a 21st century economy impacted by rapid technological change. IETF's findings and recommendations which are most aligned with innovative education and student-centered practices, as they relate to preparing tomorrow's workforce are:

1. The highest ranked initiative, as determined by the IETF, focused on providing additional personalized learning pathways that would be recognized by the state. Specifically, a personalized graduation pathway that could complement the current Carnegie Unit-based system was strongly recommended. Given the increasing opportunity for interdisciplinary, work-based and proficiency-based instruction and assessment, confining graduation requirements to specific credits was identified as a major barrier to student-centered learning. Instead, a proficiency transcript, in which mastery could be demonstrated in multiple modalities and disciplines, was identified as a way to preserve rigor while promoting flexibility. This personalized pathway would not replace the current credit-based graduation pathway: students would be able to select the route that was best aligned to their future aspirations.

2. Educating students is hard work and is made more difficult when done in isolation. The IETF recommends the creation and dissemination of innovation tool kits to help support districts wanting to explore more student-centered learning practices. The tool kits will be comprised of information developed by North Dakota educators leading instructional changes in their community and other research-based best practices.
3. In today's data-driven environment, sharing data around new practices is imperative to ensure successful initiatives can be scaled and replicated. The IETF recommends that districts identify key data metrics, ranging from behavioral referrals to extracurricular participation, to help inform their decisions and ensure new innovative systems do not throw "the baby out with the bathwater."

Governor Doug Burgum and state Superintendent of Public Instruction Kirsten Baesler applaud the Presidential Memorandum aimed at expanding access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and recognizing the important role it plays in developing a new generation of citizens contributing to the American economy. "We're grateful to the administration for placing such strong emphasis on STEM education, which dovetails with our own efforts to promote innovative, project-based, experiential learning opportunities that better prepare students for lifelong learning in the 21st century economy," Burgum said.

Gov. Doug Burgum joined Governors for Computer Science, a partnership comprised of bipartisan state leaders committed to advancing policy and funding to expand access to, and increase equity in, K-12 computer science education. "Providing access to computer science courses is fundamental to our students' success and an important part of our focus on innovative education and addressing workforce development gaps in our state," said Burgum. "Additional exposure to computer science in K-12 will help our students succeed in a 21st century economy where computing is part of virtually every facet of our daily lives." Goals of the partnership include enabling all high schools to offer at least one rigorous computer science course, funding professional learning opportunities so teachers can be prepared to teach these courses and creating a set of high-quality academic standards for K-12 computer science to guide local implementation of courses.

Demonstrating the State's commitment to increasing access to computer science in schools, 18 North Dakota educators completed North Dakota's first-ever K-12 Computer Science and Cybersecurity Standards in March 2019. These standards are designed to provide all students with a quality, equal-opportunity education in computer science and cybersecurity that becomes a fundamental and foundational component of their education. Additionally, during the 2019 Legislative Session, one of the few bills to receive unanimous support in both the House and Senate was Senate Bill 2171, which provided the state superintendent with the authority to issue credentials for teachers of computer and cyber science. Many efforts are being made to provide teachers with the necessary training to learn about computer science - including coding, digital literacy, and cybersecurity. EduTech and ND DPI have developed partnerships that will aid in providing trainings to K-12 teachers in North Dakota.

Higher education also is a key to our state's future. Out-of-school youth are encouraged to seek post-secondary education to earn necessary credentials that will prepare them to fill open positions within the state. In recent years, North Dakota has taken significant steps forward in making post-secondary education more affordable for all of our young people. Increasing the skills of North Dakota's youth aligns with the Governor's vision for a highly skilled workforce to support the State's economic growth and increases per-capita income. North Dakota's commitment to increasing access to post-secondary education, while also preparing students to

fill available jobs is demonstrated by the 2019 state legislature with the passing of House Bill 1171, creating a skilled workforce scholarship and student loan repayment program aimed at attracting people into high need and emerging occupations in the state. The result is the ND Career Builders Scholarship & Loan Repayment program. The North Dakota University System institutions across the state, along with agency partners including the ND Workforce Development Council, ND Department of Commerce, the Bank of North Dakota, and Job Service of North Dakota are promoting this opportunity for students, employees, and businesses. The program targets the workforce needs of North Dakota with the goal of recruiting and retaining talent in skilled workforce jobs. Additional information on the program can be found at <https://ndus.edu/career-builders>.

Another resource is the state funded Operation Intern program, which provides financial support for companies offering internships within target industries and/or on the state's in-demand jobs list. The maximum amount of Operation Intern funds an employer can receive is \$20,000 per funding round or \$40,000 per biennium. Employers will be limited to a maximum of five interns each funding round. This biennium will have two funding rounds. The first round of funding will be from June 1, 2019-March 31, 2020. Operation Intern is a way to expand Internship and work experience opportunities for North Dakota Higher Education and Secondary students with North Dakota employers. More information can be found at <https://www.workforce.nd.gov/workforce/OperationIntern>.

Incorporating a model of career information and career promotion will insure that students, parents, educators, and other career influencers are aware of the career opportunities which are being created by North Dakota business and industry and the requirements for those opportunities. Two industry awareness efforts, energy and information technology, are in place to inform secondary school youth, parents and teachers of employment opportunities. Both industry awareness efforts started with Governor's state set-aside funds and due to the success, have been sustained. Career and Technical Education provides funding and enables the continuation of the provision of this career information. This effort supports the State's vision by insuring that youth and others have information on careers specific to North Dakota and their region at their disposal. This will assist them in making career choices which will lead to employment in North Dakota.

The Career Outlook is a publication of the North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education's Career Resource Network. The publication includes a multitude of information that assists youth to research and plan for their career. Youth can complete a self-assessment, a career clusters interest inventory, research occupations, explore options to finance education, military opportunities and employment.

<https://www.cte.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/CRN/CareerOutlook/CareerOutlook.pdf>

Additionally, RUPrepareND.com is a software program that the Bank of ND and Student Loans of ND provide to all North Dakota public and private middle schools and high schools. The program allows access to career exploration, education planning, and ACT test preparation tools. It features sections for students and parents. Youth can explore career and education options, complete an interest profile and a skills survey, and plan for high school and college. A portfolio is created and can be revisited as students make decisions throughout their school years.

The North Dakota Commission on Education Improvement recommends ways to improve the current system of delivering and financing elementary and secondary education, including the equitable distribution of state education dollars. The Commission recognized the need to increase the amount of time available to students for career planning. The relatively high ratio

of students to counselors (450 to 1) was reduced to 300 to 1. To help meet that lower ratio a Career Advisor position was created to work under the direction of a school counselor and can be counted for 30% of a counseling programs time. A Career Advisor has received in-depth training in the areas of career development and incorporates career development information or skills in his/her work with students, parents, or school staff. There are 30 trained Career Advisors in schools across the state. There are another 30 trained individuals working in a variety of venues including colleges, both public and tribal, and REAs.

Finally, school districts utilize career advisors to provide sequential career development activities, current career information, and related career exploration opportunities to students in grades seven through twelve. A career advisor will use computer-assisted career guidance systems and provide career information to students, staff and parents. Other activities include facilitated classroom career exploration activities, maintained student career portfolios, coordinated job shadows, career fairs, college visits, job interviews, administration and interpretation of interest assessments and student preparation with employment-seeking skills. Student benefits from career development activities include a sense of achievement, greater ownership, a sense of direction and purpose, and development of a lifelong skill.

3. Performance Goals: Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

4. Assessment:

Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

The North Dakota Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development developed and implements a system of performance and accountability measures for the state around workforce development, workforce training and talent attraction. Each partner in the workforce development system provides the data necessary to implement these measures.

The Division of Workforce Development consults with partners in the state's system for workforce development, workforce training, and talent attraction, including the Department of Career and Technical Education, the Department of Public Instruction, Job Service North Dakota, the State Board of Higher Education, the Department of Human Services, and other Divisions of the Department of Commerce.

The measures are continuously reviewed to identify and implement improvements to the State's system for workforce development, workforce training, and talent attraction. Division of Workforce Development develops linkages between partners of the State's system for workforce development, workforce training, and talent attraction, to assure coordination and non-duplication of programs and services provided in the state. The performance accountability report is made available at:

<https://www.workforce.nd.gov/about/PerformanceAccountability/>.

The assessment, which compiles data from individual program years, in addition to data from each biennium, provides an at-a-glance image of program success and opportunities for improvement. Distributing this information across all workforce development, workforce

training, and talent attraction partners allows for each to establish attainable goals that will enhance the impact of each program within the state's workforce development system.

C. STATE STRATEGY

North Dakota will continue to strive for a strong comprehensive workforce system that enables individuals to move easily between employment and skill improvement to advance their careers, achieve their occupational goals, and contribute to a growing economy. The workforce system includes partners in delivery of labor exchange services funded by Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, labor market information, workplace training, skills development and education, along with partners in business, industry and economic development.

Collaboration among partners for comprehensive delivery of services will include identification of skill needs and training gaps, and addressing training needs for in-demand occupations. The Governor's five targeted industries, as well as in-demand occupations in support industries, will be the primary focus of skill development strategies for the State. Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult education and WIOA Youth funds will be used to help targeted youth populations access jobs and occupational training opportunities that will keep them connected with their communities and North Dakota's labor market. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides services to youth which will assist them with identifying appropriate career goals and make the adjustment from school to employment. Pre-employment transition services are offered to high school students age 14-21. Services include job exploration, work based learning opportunities, counseling on enrollment in post-secondary education, workplace readiness and self-advocacy. Adult Education enabling youth to acquire the basic skills necessary to function in today's society so that they can benefit from the completion of secondary school, enhanced family life, attaining citizenship and participating in job training programs.

The North Dakota workforce development and training system receives Federal and State funding support, and in many cases matching funds are also provided by the private sector. WIOA Title I funds are used to help leverage other Federal fund sources such as Pell Grants and student loans. In addition, WIOA funds are used to help leverage state and private sector funds available to address workforce training needs. North Dakota has a strong collaboration among state workforce partners to increase the employment of North Dakotan's with disabilities. Staff from local offices of DVR, Job Service North Dakota and Adult Basic Education collaborate in joint planning and service delivery to individuals with disabilities.

Core program staff collaborate to best achieve that goal for their participants. These efforts will continue to be coordinated to support North Dakota's Talent Initiative goals to expand, attract, and retain talent to meet the state's workforce needs.

Sector strategies

Sector strategies will be expanded to continue enhancing and strengthening economic vitality through addressing employer and job-seeker talent requirements. Sector partnerships implement effective coordinated responses and integrate resources to develop the talent and workforce needs of key industries of a regional labor market.

Labor market information will be used as the basis to map and assess current sector activities to identify successes and challenges along with emerging market areas. This data will be used to understand the skills required for the current and future workforce and prioritize target industries.

Job Service participates in many activities that support economic development around the state. Established sector strategy groups hold manufacturing roundtables to jointly discuss industry challenges and find solutions, one challenge is recruiting workforce. Two examples of these are the Dickinson Manufacturing Roundtable located in the southwest part of the state and the Highway Two West Manufacturing Association located in the northeast part of the state. Additionally, during the last two years, the Unmanned Aerial System industry has grown at an immense pace and has added a roundtable quarterly discussion that Job Service staff are invited to. Job Service staff offer the services available to assist with labor exchange, training opportunities and labor market information at all of these statewide strategy meetings. Additionally, Job Service AJC staff participate in sector strategies with Tech Connect IT Sector and the Health Tech Trade Steering Committee.

Through the EmPower North Dakota Commission, leaders from all major energy industries in North Dakota meet regularly with one common goal: to be critical thinkers for the development of the state's energy resources. The strategic partnerships between North Dakota's long-standing and emerging energy industries enable all sectors of the industry to work together as they meet our state's and country's energy needs. North Dakota is proactive and aggressive in addressing energy development and serves as a model for America in fostering innovative, long-term energy strategies to meet our nation's growing energy demand and need for energy security in an environmentally responsible manner.

Career Pathways

WIOA provides an extraordinary opportunity to improve job and career options for North Dakota workers and job seekers through an integrated, job-driven, public workforce system that links diverse talent to businesses. It supports the development of strong, vibrant regional economies where businesses thrive and people want to live and work. The workforce system includes three focus areas: the needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions; American Job Centers provide customer service to jobseekers and employers and the workforce system supports strong economies and plays an active role in community and workforce development.

Career and Technical Education, Adult education, post-secondary education, and other partners collaborate to establish career pathways systems that make it easier for all individuals to attain the skills and credentials needed for jobs in North Dakota.

Career pathway systems offer an effective approach to the development of a skilled workforce by increasing the number of workers in the North Dakota who gain industry-recognized and academic credentials necessary to work in jobs that are in-demand. Core partners will align educational offerings with business needs, career pathways systems engage business in the development of educational programs up front. Career pathways systems transform the role of employers from a customer to a partner and a co-leader and co-investor in the development of the workforce. Employers have a high stake in the development of career pathways that lead to an increase in their pipeline of qualified workers. The North Dakota career pathways system will offer a more efficient and customer-centered approach to workforce development by structuring connections among employers, adult basic education, support service providers, occupational training, and post-secondary education programs. Career pathway programs make it easier for people to earn industry-recognized credentials through avenues that are more relevant; to provide opportunities for more flexible education and training; and to attain market identifiable skills that can transfer into work. These comprehensive education and training programs are suited to meet the needs of working learners and non-traditional students.

Career pathways programs will be designed to serve a diverse group of learners to include; adults, youth, dislocated workers, veterans, individuals with a disability, public assistance recipients, new immigrants, English language learners, and justice-involved individuals. The ND Career and Technical Education has created 16 career clusters that organize virtually all occupations around 16 broad categories. Occupations within each cluster require similar skills and knowledge. The categories include: • Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources / Energy • Architecture & Construction • Arts, A/V Technology & Communications • Business Management & Administration • Education & Training • Finance • Government & Public Administration • Health Science • Hospitality & Tourism • Human Services • Information Technology • Law & Public Safety • Manufacturing • Marketing • Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics • Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Each career cluster has a poster created on-line that lists occupations under heading of education required; High School Diploma or Equivalent, Post-Secondary non-degree award or Associate's Degree and Bachelor's Degree or Higher. Each poster included a column that lists the ND annual openings and typical annual wage. Career cluster information is available online on the ND Career and Technical Education website under Student Resources at <https://www.cte.nd.gov/career-clusters>. The career clusters are available to all core partner programs and are used for career exploration.

The Career Outlook publication is a comprehensive resource that includes self-assessment tools, occupational research, information on financing an education, employment and education and training. The Career Outlook supports thoughtful, deliberate planning to choose a career that is personally satisfying and fulfills a critical need in local communities. The workforce of tomorrow will need the knowledge, technical skill, and attitude necessary to be globally competitive. This publication guides individual through the process of planning and preparing for a lifetime of success in North Dakota.

<https://www.cte.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/CRN/CareerOutlook/CareerOutlook.pdf>

WIOA training funds support career pathways in many occupation areas such as healthcare career ladders of nurse assistant, licensed practical nurse and registered nurse. Transportation occupations offer increased wages and opportunity based on skills and endorsements held. Welding occupations require a variety of skills and certifications to work in specific areas. The ND eligible training provider list offers many certifications to expand skills for these in demand occupations in the State. <https://www.jobsnd.com/training/providers>.

The Workforce Development Council has established an in-demand occupations list for North Dakota in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The list includes occupations determined to have a current or potential impact on the state's economy. The list includes occupations where training results in needed industry credentials. North Dakota Labor Market Information's 2016-2026 long-term employment projections and US Bureau of Labor Statics were used by applying the following factors: Average annual wages (entry level), Average annual wages (overall), Competitiveness, 2016 Employment, Absolute employment growth, CAGR employment growth, and Annual job openings.

<https://www.jobsnd.com/sites/www/files/documents/jsnd-documents/indemandoccupationslist.pdf>

Vocational Rehabilitation allows for exited individuals to reapply for increased skills for career advancement. Career pathway training provides new opportunities for individuals whose disability has advanced and is now requiring changes in work environment and needs new or advanced skills.

Finally, the Greater North Dakota Chamber provides a license for The Manufacturing Institute's Dream It, Do It, a sector strategy to connect with high school students to provide exposure to manufacturing jobs and dispel misconceptions about the industry. Manufacturers identify young professionals within their company who engage students to inspire them to consider a career in manufacturing. This model has been shared with the Workforce Development Council and other industries in hopes to replicate the successes and provide career awareness experiences for the next generation of workers.

The state of North Dakota has been proactive in development of partnerships with business and industry, education, economic development, and the workforce development system to continuously identify and address workforce challenges. The Workforce Development Council, community colleges, business and labor, the Office of Apprenticeship, and TrainND all work closely to identify workforce needs and address training solutions. DVR's primary mission is to assist North Dakotans with disabilities to improve their employment opportunities and to assist North Dakota businesses in finding solutions to their disability—related issues.

Through this "dual client" approach, DVR assist individuals with permanent injuries, illness, or impairments to achieve competitive integrated employment and increased independence. DVR also assists business owners and employers through full service business consultation on a variety of business and disability—related areas. Core program partners will collaborate with Career and Technical Education to receive professional development to build a common understanding of career pathways and how they can be used across all agencies. Career and Technical Education will, with consultation of the others involved, take the lead on professional development that will be applied across all agencies.

North Dakota continues to see resettlements of New Americans. Job Service AJCs link Adult Education and English literacy programs. Adult Education offers programs assist English language learners in literacy activities, rights and responsibility of students, workforce training, and can include integrated education and training. The Fargo Adult Learning Center is currently the only ALC in ND offering all of the above in a program called Integrated English language and civics education (IELCE). All ALCs in the State offer English language acquisition classes, a form of citizenship, and workforce training. Fargo ALC receives additional funding from WIOA to offer the IELCE program with IET. Job Service AJC and other core partners are available and request to help in preparing participants so that unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations can occur. Also, so economic self-sufficiency can be obtained.

A growing partnership with CTE is a goal for upcoming program years. Talks have already begun about the "how". The goal is to simply allow Adult Education participants access to the machines, training, teachers that are currently being used in the CTE program. In some of our ALCs in ND, a shared physical location exists as well as a shared Director. It has always been seen as two separated student populations, but it seems plausible that we can find a way to utilize this resource. ND is also going to explore opportunities of CTE in our postsecondary institutions, this could be a large factor in widening our options for IET offerings across the state. With resources that are not sufficient to provide certain workforce trainings, partnerships become key. One of the pillars in solving the workforce challenge in ND deals with tapping into historically underutilized populations, especially those with barriers. ALCs, in concert with VR and Job Service centers, are strategically planning ways in which we can make an impact in this area.

Involving interns in North Dakota businesses addresses two important challenges. Internships provide employees in a tight labor market and build connections between young people and

North Dakota employers. The state funded Operation Intern program offers private businesses up to \$20,000 every two years to fund internships in their companies.

Co-enrollments of participants are encouraged to maximize the total resources available for preparation of the workforce to meet employment needs. Examples of funds leveraged with WIOA include: Title II Adult Education; Carl Perkins; Trade Act; Tribal WIOA and Tribal 477 programs; Motivation, Education and Training (MET); TANF; Vocational Rehabilitation; SCSEP, and North Dakota New Jobs Training. WIOA funds are used to cover the cost of GED testing, dual enrollments with WIOA Dislocated Worker funds complement Trade Act enrollments, MET and WIOA co—enrollments support training and Vocational Rehabilitation referrals receive Wagner-Peyser services. JOBS clients also receive Wagner- Peyser services routinely and receive WIOA assistance as appropriate. Building on these partnerships assist in determining what funding source is best utilized to increase job seeker skills and to increase customer service. These efforts result in meeting the needs of North Dakota employers and supporting the Governor’s vision.

The Job Service AJCs staff include the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG). All JVSG staff are Disabled Veteran Outreach Program and assist the needs of disabled veterans and those veterans and eligible persons who require intensive services in order to obtain and retain employment that supports their self—sufficiency. DVOP services are available in all Job Service AJCs and are integrated into all service delivery offerings. UI claims are taken only through online means. This service delivery model increases the need for assistance from Job Service AJC staff. Job Service AJCs have adjusted as required by WIOA and have adapted service delivery to meet the growing needs of UI claimants. UI claimants have a series of “How To” instructional videos to assist with the UI claims filing process and weekly certification. The videos are posted on the Job Service webpage [jobsnd.com](https://www.jobsnd.com/unemployment-individuals/unemployment-insurance-how-videos). <https://www.jobsnd.com/unemployment-individuals/unemployment-insurance-how-videos>

The Department of Commerce applied for and received an Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant. This grant will create a program which helps statewide companies in the state’s primary industries and those businesses looking for qualified seekers filling in-demand occupations. The program will offer class room and online training through the North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS). NDSCS has a long tradition of providing responsive, accessible, and flexible training solutions that include their current apprenticeship programs. NDSCS has curriculum currently approved with the Department of Labor and will be expanding their offerings to meet the growing needs in healthcare and manufacturing industries.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

A. STATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. STATE BOARD FUNCTIONS

The North Dakota Workforce Development Council serves as the State Board under WIOA section 101(d). North Dakota is designated by the Governor as a single state local area.

The Council shall carry out the functions of a local board. The Workforce Development Council identifies, develops and recommends workforce policy changes to programs that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the State’s workforce development system. Targeted industry and potential labor pools are the focus of the Council meetings to provide direction for a comprehensive workforce development strategic plan. The Council identifies and develops

opportunities for collaboration and partnership between education, employment and supporting workforce development policies, resources and activities in the State. The nine American Job Centers are located regionally throughout North Dakota.

July 2017, the Workforce Development Council voted to restructure the membership to meet the WIOA section 101(b). The Council represents diverse geographic areas of the state. The chairperson was selected by the Governor and represents business, and a director and support staff are employees of the North Dakota Department of Commerce and Job Service, and assist the Council in performing its functions.

The Council as a whole are responsible to the Governor for: Identifying, developing and recommending workforce policy changes to federal and state programs that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the State's workforce development system; Reviewing and identifying the current and future economic development and workforce development needs of the state and recommending steps for meeting those needs; Providing direction for a comprehensive workforce development strategic plan; Identifying and developing recommended actions that will enhance and increase the capacity of the state's workforce development system; Identifying and developing opportunities for collaboration and partnership between education, employment and supporting workforce development activities in the State; Reviewing and approving a Council operating budget; Performing the duties and functions of State Board as prescribed under WIOA.

The Workforce Development Council creates policies as required by WIOA and receives reports for all core programs, career technical education and Department of Commerce. The members review the law and regulations and considers the benefits to the state. The Workforce Development Council considers the service delivery for the state and the single local area designation when determining service providers. The Council enters into memorandums of understanding for providers for WIOA Youth services and Adult and Dislocated Worker career services. The Council considers the unique characteristics of North Dakota and the wishes of the Governor when making provider decisions. In order for the Council to have a better understanding of what the nine AJCs across the state provide to the employers and citizens through the Title I and III programs, the Job Service Workforce Services Director (One-Stop Operator) has invited all Council members into the AJCs for a tour over the next six months. Additionally, each AJC manager has been given a goal of connecting with their area council member and again personally invite them into the AJCs to understand the mission of Job Service North Dakota and what we provide to our customers.

In following WIOA's training emphasis for in-demand occupations, the Workforce Development Council will review LMI data annually and make adjustments as necessary. Biennially, the Council creates and submits a list of recommendations for workforce legislative initiatives to the Governor. These recommendations are utilized by entities in their legislative testimonies to Standing Committees. Additionally, the recommendations are also used to drive the projects taken on by the Department of Commerce Workforce Division.

The Executive Committee provides for the administration, continuity and good order of the Council as a whole and performs executive management tasks as may be determined by the Council membership, including: a. Assist in establishing the meeting agendas for the Council. b. Track all outstanding actions of the Council and recommend actions that would assure successful completion of all tasks and objectives. c. Recommend policy positions for the Council's review and approval. d. Establish task groups when needed——design purpose and role, obtain and appoint members, designate chair, and establish operating parameters and completion time subject to approval of the Council.

The Administrative Committee shall be responsible for: a. Developing a Unified State Plan. b. Recommend to the Council, goals for the development and continuous improvement of the statewide workforce delivery system to include development of linkages to assure coordination and non—duplication among programs and activities. c. Provide recommendations for improvement of comprehensive State workforce delivery system, including State adjusted levels of performance as needed when the core program performance fails to meet negotiated levels. d. Recommend projects to the Council for Governor’s consideration for funding and provide recommendations to the Council on the use of the Governor’s Set Aside Funds when available.

Finally, the Council has created three subcommittees which all have a specific area of focus based on the report of recommendations released by the Council in October 2018. Each subcommittee has been tasked with building strategies to accomplish the goals in one of the following areas from the original report: 1) Recruiting and retention of workers; 2) Addressing opportunities for the populations with barriers to employment; and 3) Focusing on the career exposure and technical skills gap. Two additional subcommittees are being created and will focus on developing a communication plan and educating citizensthroughout the state on the initiatives developed by the Council, and occupational licensing reform. The existing subcommittees started meeting monthly in October 2019 and the new subcommittees will follow suit once they are formed.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE’S STRATEGY

The North Dakota workforce system gives all stakeholders including businesses, students, job seekers, researchers, and public officials access to all federally—funded workforce development programs, as well as several state—funded programs. Services provided through the Job Service AJCs include: • WIOA Title IB—Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth • Wagner—Peysner • Unemployment Insurance • TANF Employment and Training (JOBS) • Labor Market Information (LMI) • Jobs for Veterans State Grant • Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) • Foreign Labor Certification • SNAP Employment and Training (BEST)

Job Service AJC system core and required partners’ include: • Adult Education and Family Literacy Act • Vocational Rehabilitation • Post—secondary Career and Technical Education under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act • Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and Job Corps.

North Dakota capitalizes on the strengths each partner brings to the system while reducing or eliminating duplication of products and services. The simplicity in the structure with defined roles and responsibilities of all partners allow case managers and providers to deliver the services necessary for North Dakota’s growth and competitive edge.

Job seekers have the option to search for employment, review labor market information and a variety of other employment topics through Jobsnd.com. Links to the job listing site provides fast access to a database of thousands of jobs. Jobsnd.com utilizes Job Spidering, a powerful online tool that captures job listings from other sources including corporate web sites, online newspaper listings, and other private job boards. Spidered jobs are added to Job Service’s internal job listings to provide seamless access to thousands of job openings.

Employers benefit from having job openings viewed by the largest applicant pool in North Dakota and the ability to view similar listings for wage and benefit comparison. Job seekers benefit by having the largest single portal in North Dakota to access job openings for all occupations. Jobsnd.com has the largest pool of job openings in the state. Job Service provides

staff assisted services. Job seekers are assessed to identify current skill levels and gaps. The assessment information is used to determine skill development opportunities within in—demand occupations. Labor market information is provided for job seekers to make informed occupational choices and execute their job search efficiently. Career services will be provided to the extent needed based on individual assessments. Support service needs will be assessed and referrals made to partner programs or known community resources. Informational services are provided through the Dakota Medical Foundation’s FirstLink 211 Network.

The FirstLink Network is a unique resource that brings together workforce development partners, faith—based organizations, community organizations and businesses.

The FirstLink Network is a partnership developed to assist customers gain access services in order to obtain, retain and advance in employment.

Job Service AJC staff providing assessment and orientation services will be knowledgeable of services of all core and required partners and will be able to explain services available and refer job seekers for those services. North Dakota has a strong history of partner collaboration and dual enrollment of mutual clients. Partner program staff, through release of information, share assessment information and employment plans. The sharing of information provides convenience for the client and also enhances the chances of success. When all employment and training resources are considered, the likelihood of success is greatly increased. ITA costs sharing with DVR and WIOA has been occurring for over a decade. Students working with Adult Education to earn their GED have received support services to cover testing costs. TANF participants, especially out—of—school youth, are referred to and receive WIOA services. Job—driven workforce development will prepare workers and ensure businesses have skilled workers to be competitive. Individuals can quickly learn skills where hands—on experience in a work environment is integrated with classroom learning.

Job-driven training programs will be promoted with the aim to include work—based learning opportunities that best suit their participants. Work based learning activities include: • Work experience, paid and unpaid • Job shadows • Internships • On-the-job training and Registered apprenticeships.

Participant outcomes of employment and wages improve with work based learning activities. Employers reduce their recruitment and training costs with work—based learning activities. It also helps them hire better—prepared employees who understand workplace expectations. WIOA Career Services includes activities on behalf of employers, including small employers, which describe the work based learning opportunities available. Job driven training ensures that job seekers and workers are equipped with the skills needed by employers and are matched to employers with good jobs. Staff will utilize the eligible training provider list and the ND in—demand occupation list to promote individual training accounts. Classroom training and on—the—job training will support the workforce needs of employers and where available, apprenticeships. Funds will be leveraged between core and required programs whenever possible.

Co- enrollments of participants are encouraged to maximize the total resources available for preparation of the workforce to meet employment needs. Examples of funds leveraged with WIOA Title I funds include: Title II Adult Education; Carl Perkins; Trade Act; Tribal WIOA and Tribal 477 programs; Motivation, Education and Training (MET); TANF employment and training (JOBS); SNAP Employment and Training (BEST); Vocational Rehabilitation and SCSEP. WIOA funds are used to cover the cost of GED testing, dual enrollments with WIOA Dislocated Worker funds complement Trade Act enrollments, MET and WIOA co-enrollments leverage program training funds and Vocational Rehabilitation referrals receive Wagner-Peyser services.

JOBS and BEST clients receive Wagner-Peyser services routinely and receive WIOA assistance as appropriate. These partnerships assist in determining what funding source is best utilized to increase job seeker skills. These efforts result in meeting the needs of North Dakota employers and supporting the Governor's vision.

To ensure the WIOA requirements are implemented with fidelity and to the 'spirit' of the law, the state core partner agencies will work together to increase collaboration through professional development. Regional core partners routinely meet and cover such topics as labor market information (LMI), career pathways, motivational interviewing, agency roles and partnerships. Regional training to ensure networking, common training understanding and implementation of exemplary practices. This training concept maximizes staff time, funding and participant outcomes.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE PLAN

Core partners collaborate with community efforts and initiatives to assist North Dakotans meet their employment goals and increase earnings. Core partner staff participate in a variety of activities that promote in-demand careers, career pathways, academic achievement and employment.

Collaboration among WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, DVR, Unemployment Insurance, SCSEP, Trade Act, business and industry, the North Dakota University System, TrainND (state funded customized employee training), Career and Technical Education (Carl Perkins), Adult Basic Education, refugee services, foster care providers, the Department of Corrections, and many more partners will result in:

- Expanded awareness and leverage of programs/funds designated to serving targeted populations, often served by multiple entities;
- Rapid development and deployment of programs and activities unique to economic and employment needs for North Dakota's workforce;
- Access to increased numbers of persons in need of assistance, including low skilled, low income, individuals with disabilities, English Language Learners, disaffected youth, veterans, dislocated workers, and individuals residing in high unemployment areas, including American Indians.

The current collaboration between SCSEP and DVR is strong and greatly enhances the success of individuals. SCSEP refers participants to DVR to assist with disability evaluation and assessment and adaptation toward their employment. DVR refers clients to SCSEP to assist with assessment of job skills and required training for employment in specific career fields.

SCSEP is progressively building partnerships with the Older Americans Act senior service providers, adult protective services, county social services, local veteran's service centers, Adult Education, Job Service AJCs, homeless coalitions, and tribal colleges, to facilitate referral of services. The co-enrollment of clients provides maximum access to available resources.

The Center for Rural Health (CRH), University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences and the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) utilize state, federal and private funding to focus on maintaining access to quality health care for North Dakota residents. A critical component to being able to provide health care services is having adequate workforce. The CRH and AHEC, in partnership with the ND Department of Commerce, and other stakeholders across the state, support student experiences fostering interest and excitement about a careers in health care. Career pathway efforts include Rural Collaborative Opportunities for Occupational Learning (R-COOL) Health Scrubs Academies and Camps; HOSA Future Health Professionals, the only statewide student organization that focuses on health careers; and AHEC Scholars program and rural clinical rotation experiences for college students in health care profession programs.

There is one Job Corps center in ND. The Burdick Job Corps Center is located in Minot, ND and partners with the Minot AJC. All new job corps students have one-stop center orientation onsite and offer career services when employment and future training is appropriate. The Burdick Job Corps Center has staff co-located for admissions and placement services in the Bismarck AJC. All AJC staff are familiar with the Burdick Job Corps and refer potential students and assist with employment and training needs to students returning to the area.

Registered Apprenticeship alignment has been strengthened within the state workforce system. Registered Apprenticeship has been incorporated into Job Service ND applicant services and business services within the WIOA core programs with the help of the Apprenticeship Accelerator grant and Governor's Set-aside funds. Job orders in the labor exchange system are flagged as Registered Apprenticeship openings. All Job Service staff, including WIOA program case managers, have the list of current Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to become familiar of the activity in the State for employer and occupation targets for program promotion. Business service staff messages with employers will include Registered Apprenticeship benefits.

The Department of Commerce applied for and received an Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant. This grant will create a program which helps statewide companies in the state's primary industries and those businesses looking for qualified seekers filling in-demand occupations. The program will offer class room and online training through the North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS). NDSCS has a long tradition of providing responsive, accessible, and flexible training solutions that include their current apprenticeship programs. NDSCS has curriculum currently approved with the Department of Labor and will be expanding their offerings to meet the growing needs in healthcare and manufacturing industries.

This program will upturn the current North Dakota apprenticeship usage. By working with students, parents, groups which represent under represented populations, and NDSCS – this approach will engage individuals to start a pipeline for industry and draw from. Youth will build a familiarity with the apprenticeship model as will those looking for a career change. Individuals working full-time will also become aware of the opportunity to change or start career paths without incurring student loan debt.

Unemployment insurance for North Dakota is administered through Job Service ND. This allows for a strong working relationship with the Job Service AJC's. Job Service AJC staff receive annual training on the Unemployment Insurance Internet Claim Entry (UIICE) system from UI staff. UI staff work directly with Job Service AJC staff when UI claimants have specific issues and questions. Many claimants depend on Job Service AJC staff for assistance with their online claim filing and to navigate UIICE for the reemployment requirements. Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services to UI claimants. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the local employer requirements and assist with this online application process. Social media is discussed as a means to broaden a UI claimant's job search.

UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in- demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed.

Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities.

Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. UI claimants are provided information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs and are instructed on where to find future events on the Job Service ND website. Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews.

Job Service ND is a grant recipient to provide services for the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program. The agency provides the following services to TANF recipients living in Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Traill counties; case management, coaching on a variety of soft skills ranging from problem solving, working with difficult people, child care and scheduling problems, job retention guidance includes frequent, structured status checks, self-evaluation and planning for the next step on the career ladder and ongoing job coaching can help improve job performance and avoid employment disciplinary issues. All career services and referrals to training are available to TANF recipients across the state. Job Service AJC's shall continue to invite additional JOBS contractor staff to the local offices to strengthen partnerships and to promote and explain all the services available to TANF recipients. Outreach will continue to create collaborative partnerships and result in additional co-enrollments particularly with WIOA Youth services.

Job Service AJC staff utilize Community Action Partnership as a referral source for support services. The services include budgeting and money management, child care, commodities, emergency assistance, energy assistance, food pantry, head start, housing, self-sufficiency, volunteer income tax assistance, and weatherization in most locations. Community Action has a financial literacy resource available online that is available for all customers.

Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET) operates the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in eastern North Dakota. An ongoing partnership between Job Service ND and MET has existed to provide MSFWs additional opportunities for employment and training. MET maintains offices in the Red River Valley cities of Grafton and Fargo. Additionally, MET has an office in the Wahpeton, ND AJC. These MET offices and the Job Service AJCs work together to provide services to MSFW's in the respective areas. Tying the various service agencies together broadens the potential of serving the MSFWs in a one-stop concept.

North Dakota receives five Indian and Native American program awards. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the tribal colleges around the state and refer individuals who may be eligible for these grant funds. As these funds become limited, Job Service AJC staff are notified to provide assistance and services through WIOA Title I funds.

C. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS

North Dakota has an established core partner working relationship. DVR and Job Service AJC staff participate on local Adult Education advisory boards. Job Service staff are appointed members of the State Rehabilitation Council and are on the North Dakota state and local Transition Community of Practice teams. Core partner staff have integrated business services activities and local partner collaboration meetings to further integrate services. These meetings act as a way to educate each other on the services available under all titles which results in appropriate referrals and enhanced outcomes. State level trainings are offered to all local core

program staff. Efforts to integrate service delivery and formalize referral process continue on the State level as well as between local programs.

With the WIOA increase in age eligibility and focus to spend 75 percent of WIOA youth funds on out-of-school youth, recruitment efforts are targeted toward this population. Youth Coordinators work closely with Job Service AJC Resource Room staff, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation on referral and dual enrollment of out-of-school youth. In addition, Youth Coordinators utilize local networks with social service staff and/or community-based programs targeting homeless, disabled and transitioning youth.

Unemployment insurance claimants within the age eligibility are targeted for out-of-school youth recruitment. Although the focus has shifted to serving the out-of-school population, outreach continues to be provided to schools. Communication with school personnel including principals, CTE teachers and counselors is crucial to locate students who have dropped out or for those graduating and in need of assistance for occupational skills training to fill the jobs in-demand.

The strong relationship between the WIOA Youth Coordinators and DVR staff has resulted in over 65.4% of WIOA youth participants with disabilities in PY 2018. This can be attributed to collaboration on participant needs and the need to maximize funding due to North Dakota's minimum funding levels.

The blend of career services and referral is provided and may vary depending on the customer needs that will be addressed. Customers may be directed to self-service only, job getting services, or skill development services based on their initial skill assessment results. Co-enrollment will be utilized as appropriate in order to provide the most appropriate funding source for those services that best meet the customer's needs in a cost effective manner. A customer-focused approach including an initial assessment of skill level, skill development, career counseling/promotion and support service needs for each individual shall be available through the Job Service AJC.

This approach will be used to determine the needs of: • Individuals with disabilities • Dislocated workers, including trade impacted • Displaced homemakers • Basic Skills deficient • Individuals with multiple challenges to employment • JOBS clients • BEST clients • Non-custodial parents • Low-income individuals including recipients of public assistance • Migrants and seasonal farm workers • Minorities • New Americans and others with limited English proficiency • Older individuals • School dropouts • Veterans • Ex-offenders • Homeless individuals

Employment into in-demand occupations will be the goal for all individuals and will include non-traditional training choices.

North Dakota continues to see an increased population of New Americans/refugees and other English Language Learners. There were 199 New American arrivals in FFY 2017, 174 in FFY 2018, 132 in FFY 2019, and a proposed 100 in FFY 2020 as reported by Lutheran Social Services. Job Service ND AJCs link with Adult Education and English literacy programs. Adult Education has offerings that incorporate English literacy with occupational skills training that is closely aligned with local economies.

The state of North Dakota has been proactive in development of partnerships with business to assist New Americans and English language learners in acquiring additional assistance and preparation to progress in employment readiness. Majority of New Americans in ND are served at the Fargo Adult Learning Center (FALC). FALC also currently is the only site in ND to receive and be operating an IELCE program. An Elders program also exists to help acclimate students

to a new environment and to help students feel more comfortable. Job Service AJC staff are available as requested to participate in the class and present job search information. The class covers basic work skills to include but not limited to soft skills, basic work math, reading, writing, transportation, interviewing, application process, childcare needs and computers. The class curriculum rotates every six weeks. In order to better serve English Language Learners, the Wagner-Peyser 10% funds will be designated to this special group of individuals.

The mission of the ND Community of Practice for Transition is to work towards building, supporting, and sustaining community partnerships. The system promotes and improves the scope, opportunity and quality of services for youth with disabilities to adequately prepare for life and career beyond high school. Communities of Practice (COP) involve people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a similar passion and who interact on a regular basis to learn from each other and problem solve. North Dakota's Community of Practice will focus on working across groups and localities to share information, address issues, learn together, find shared goals and define shared work. The North Dakota structure is modeled on the national community of practice, of which North Dakota is a member. The group will focus on developing the community by inviting relevant state agencies, and identifying groups that are involved in transition. The State and Regional Communities, as well as, other state Community of Practice groups will share information and ideas through Shared Work, a website established by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act partnership.

The ND Department of Public Instruction, Special Education Unit sponsors a Statewide Interagency Community of Practice that actively engages all stakeholders that represent the roles important to secondary transition for students with disabilities in ND. In addition, the Community of Practice extends the existing state advisory into the regions. The State Transition Community of Practice Advisory Council identifies the development of Regional Interagency Transition Committees as a strategy to improve communication, knowledge and expertise among stakeholders in the transition process for youth with disabilities. An interagency transition team brings together a variety of stakeholders who are supporting youth with disabilities so they can have the best chance for success as adults. The State Community of Practice meets quarterly and the Regional Community of Practice teams work to implement and state initiatives and best practices for the intended beneficiaries.

Recent Regional Community goals and accomplishments include: • Transition Fairs • Updated policies • Increased training opportunities • Development of timeline for services • Development of transition folders for families • Information sharing • Sharing information • Improved partnerships with the Department of Public Instruction, DVR, Developmental Disabilities, Job Service, Higher Ed, Independent Living centers, Chambers of Commerce, etc., • Development of services for students with disabilities ages 18-21 • Development of programs to balance functional and academic needs • Identification of agency responsibilities • Consistency of services throughout the region.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) offers training and employment services to assist in finding and retaining full-time employment leading to self-sufficiency. TANF families receive employment and training services by participating in the Jobs Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS). JOBS program supportive services are available that help remove barriers to employment and training such as transportation allowance, assistance with child care costs, car repairs, tools and clothing for work, work experience, on-the-job-training, job search and job readiness, community service program, vocational educational training, providing child care services to an individual who is participating in a community service program. TANF households with increased earnings may qualify for six (6) months of Transition Assistance.

Transition Assistance promotes job retention by providing an extended period of case assistance that provides a safety net of financial support and support services to assist households in attaining self-sufficiency. Post TANF supportive services may be provided to eligible individuals for up to six (6) months following the closure of their TANF or Transition Assistance case. Post TANF recipients continue to receive supportive services. TANF Kinship Care program provides enhanced funding and support services in order to expand the options for placement of children who are in the care, custody, and control of County Social Services, Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) or Executive Director, Department of Human Services. As an alternative to Foster Care, children may be placed with relatives. Kinship care rules follow many of the same rules as foster care. Diversion Assistance was implemented as a means to provide short-term emergency benefits and support services to families during a 'specific crisis or episode of need'. The intent of the assistance is to address current need that may prevent the family from needed assistance under TANF. Diversion benefits and support services may be received four months in a 12 month period. Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment (PRIDE) program is a collaborative effort with Child Support, Job Service ND and TANF Program. The program addresses non-payment of child support by the noncustodial parent. Referrals to the program are made by Child Support or by judicial order by a district court. The program assists individual find employment. Support services are offered to assist to remove barriers to employment.

Individuals with disabilities are referred to Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in finding solutions to disability-related issues to improve employment by providing:

- Assessments for items such availability and use of transportation, problem-solving abilities, strengths and weaknesses with social behaviors, communication skills, grooming, dealing with conflict, motivational skills, target interventional levels, identification of barriers and support options, transferable skills and abilities, interest, self-concept
- Job Development and Placement Services to assist in attaining the job and developing essential work skills.
- Job Retention services such as accommodations and follow along services directly engaging with the client and employer to assist in maintaining and retaining employment.
- Supported Employment for individuals who have traditionally been excluded from consideration for community employment.

TANF is the payer of first resort for TANF recipients who are eligible to receive the same supportive services from Vocational Rehabilitation.

Children and adults without a high school education are referred to Department of Public Instruction for Adult Education. School age children (ages 4 to 18) receiving TANF are automatically eligible for the Free or Reduced School Lunch Program through the Department of Public Instruction. Department of Public Instruction automatically enrolls the children in the School Lunch Program from a daily electronic match and exchange with the Department of Public Instruction to direct certify children for school meals. Services offered online by Job Service ND available to all TANF recipients:

- Search for employment
- Receive job postings
- Apply for employment
- Access current labor market information
- Resume services
- Find career assessment tools
- Assessment tools
- FirstLink 2-1-1 Network
- O'Net
- RUReady
- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)
- Rosetta Stone
- Interdisciplinary Team Case Management.

In addition, Job Service ND provides TANF recipients living in Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, and Traill counties the following services:

- Case management
- Coaching on a variety of soft skills ranging from problem solving, working with difficult people, child care problems, scheduling problems, etc.
- Job retention guidance includes frequent, structured status checks, self-evaluation and planning for the next step on the career ladder and ongoing job coaching can help improve job performance and avoid disciplinary issues

The Employment and Training Program is a required component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The primary goal of the SNAP Employment and Training program is to provide SNAP participants opportunities to gain skills, training, or experience that will improve their employment prospects and reduce their reliance on SNAP benefits. Additionally, the Employment and Training program offers a way to allow SNAP recipients to meet work requirements.

With the success of the SNAP Employment and Training two year pilot program, the Department of Human Services is expanding the SNAP Employment and Training program across the state beginning April 1, 2020. The expansion of SNAP Employment and Training will change the program from a mandatory to a voluntary program and will include the following components: Job Search Training, Job Search, Job Retention and Education/Vocational Training. Included in these components will be an assessment, development of an employment plan and case management.

Unemployment Insurance(UI) claimants, visiting a Job Service AJC receive skill assessment, career counseling, and labor market information. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to increase interview, soft or computer skills, short term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other core and community partner referrals. Job Service administers the UI, Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs.

Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services UI claimants who visit the local offices. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria. Additional services to UI claimants include assistance to create resumes for each type of employment that a UI claimant is seeking and techniques for improving interviewing skills for UI claimants. Online/electronic applications are prevalent with many employers and this application process is often problematic for UI claimants that lack computer literacy. Job Service AJC staff are familiar with the local employer requirements and assist with this online application process. Social media is discussed as a means to broaden a UI claimant's job search. UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in-demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed. Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities.

Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. UI claimants are provided information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs and are instructed on where to find future events on the Job Service ND website. Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews.

Unemployed individuals receive skill assessment, career counseling and planning, and labor market information in Job Service AJC's resource rooms. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to help improve individuals' interviewing skills, soft skills, and computer skills. Unemployed individuals receive information regarding short-term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other partner referrals.

Unemployed individuals receive job search assistance and referrals for work experience activities.

Online services are available to unemployed individuals via self-service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from anywhere internet access is available. Jobsnd.com links to the online labor exchange system for individual job search and employer job posting activities.

Unemployed job seekers can use jobsnd.com to create résumés and conduct automated job searches. Additionally, unemployed job seekers can become aware of education and training programs available and view labor market information such as high-demand occupations, current wages and training required. Unemployed job seekers can also explore career options, find direction to veteran services, and access community resources.

Under WIOA, Adult Education funds are granted to the ND Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) to provide educational services to eligible students/inmates. The ND DOCR includes the state penitentiary, the youth correctional center, and multiple transitional facilities. The ND DOCR provides a wide range of educational opportunities to incarcerated students. In North Dakota, if an incarcerated individual does not have a High School Equivalency, they are mandated by law to work towards earning one. Research shows that education, mixed with other rehabilitative pieces, can have a significant impact on recidivism rates. Adult Basic and Secondary Education is provided at each center along with GED testing and prep. Classes also exist for students whose language is not primarily English. Students with low literacy levels are included in a Read Right program. This is a research-based program that helps the student increase reading levels by increasing speed and understanding. Career readiness and digital literacy skills are also taught at each of the DOCR facilities. Each site also has their own “specialty” courses. For example, the NDSP (State Penitentiary) has computer-based drawing and design classes, AutoCAD, available for students. The James River Correctional Facility (JRCC) offers a construction trades program. The Missouri River Correctional Center (MRCC) offers a welding program provided by the Bismarck State College. Beyond earning an HSE and working on trade skills, post-secondary options are available through correspondence, IVN, or more of a traditional classroom (depending on funding and availability with partner colleges).

D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS

The Wagner-Peyser program is administered by Job Service and has historically been co-located in the Job Service AJCs alongside WIOA Title I programs, the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, TANF, SNAP, Trade Act, and PRIDE (a TANF-funded noncustodial parent employment program), facilitating collaboration and seamless service delivery between all programs when providing services to employers. North Dakota employers use jobsnd.com to post job listings, search resumes for qualified candidates, review labor market information and market trends. Employers create automated candidate searches and access links to business related resources.

Jobsnd.com uses “job spidering”, a powerful online tool that captures job listings from other sources including corporate websites, online newspaper listings, and other private job boards. Spidered jobs are added to Job Service’s internal job listing which provides great efficiency advantages for employers. Employers who list job openings on a corporate website will automatically have their positions spidered to jobsnd.com and will not have to re-enter job order information.

Job Service's Labor Market Information (LMI) Center is the premier source of labor market information in the state. The LMI department organizes and packages labor market information for use in business and economic decision-making. Regional economic profiles, job reports, unemployment rates, wage reports, informed analyses and employment projects are a few items the Job Service AJC staff provide to help businesses make more informed workforce decisions. Skill assessment completed by Job Service ND staff enables clear direction to employer job openings or referrals to training programs. Knowing the skills job seekers have helps match them to skills desired in employer's job openings. When skill gaps are identified, job seeker training needs can be quickly addressed and paired with transferable skills of job seekers. Job Service ND staff showcase agency services regarding on available self-service tools, provide assistance with entering effective job listings and share best practices for successful recruiting using the online system.

Job Service ND staff offer workshops for employers on such topics as recruitment and retention strategies in a very competitive employee market, interview and screening techniques, tax laws for employers, labor market information and writing quality job listings. Additionally, informational sessions have been conducted and are available with agriculture employers to provide guidance on H2A program regulation. Information includes common problems encountered, explanation of desk audits by the Department of Labor and Wage and Hour, housing inspection requirements and time allowed for question and answer. Similarly, employer groups have been organized to discuss the benefits and strategies used in hiring New Americans and English Language Learners.

Job fairs and "hiring events" for employers have proven to be a hugely successful activity. Job fairs are held throughout the state but mainly in the cities of Dickinson, Williston, Minot, Bismarck, Grand Forks and Fargo. These events are rather large with 60-90 employers participating in the event. During the last year alone, these events attracted more 4,400 job-seekers throughout the state. After event surveys indicated the employers present at these events would hire 57% of the job-seekers attending the job fairs. The single employer hiring events are held in each of our nine AJCs. An employer schedules time to spend in the Job Service AJC to connect directly with job seekers who are visiting the AJC. During the last year there were 523 hiring events held in the AJCs. The job fair and hiring event information is shared within the Job Service AJC, promoted on jobsnd.com website and social media platforms such as Facebook.

Additionally during June of each year, JSND coordinates with such workforce partners as Department of Corrections, DVR, Adult Ed, local Economic Development and other entities to offer 2nd Chance Job Fairs. These job fairs are held for individuals having difficulty finding a job because of background, work history or life circumstances. Business Service staff recruit employers who are willing to provide employment opportunities to this population who often times are not considered during other events.

Wagner-Peyser, WIOA and JSVG staff working in the same Job Service AJC allows for greater sharing of information about employers' needs and job seekers skills. When training needs are identified, Job Service works with employers to provide work based learning opportunities for in-demand occupations. Job seekers get updated skills to meet the changing needs of the workforce. WIOA funded work based learning is an excellent tool for skill building and helps employers grow their workforce. Existing skills are expanded and strengthened while new abilities are developed. Job Service staff working with employers are cognizant of occupations and opportunities to refer to registered apprenticeship. On- the-job training contracts paired

with registered apprenticeship opportunities provide maximum training benefits for employers.

Several core program staff serve on advisory boards for TrainND, the state's four regional workforce training regions. This frequently provides opportunities to collaborate when discussing training needs with employers. Job seekers and employers are referred to TrainND programs to build skills. Job Service staff may recommend future employer focused training opportunities to TrainND due to their connection and communications with employers. Job Service staff are engaged with local chambers of commerce and economic developers. LMI is frequently requested to help with decisions for prospective companies that are in locating to communities within the state.

Utilizing technical assistance from the national Job Driven VR Technical Assistance Center (JD-VRTAC.), DVR had developed and has been utilizing an LMI curriculum tailored to North Dakota's needs. The LMI curriculum is used to help clients set and accomplish career goals based on current business and employment needs within the state. In addition, the JD-VRTAC provided technical assistance to further enhance our methods for building and maintaining employer relations. This has resulted in improved services to employers including employer driven training and meeting their needs utilizing customized employment.

AJC staff have established collaborations between core partners to share workforce intelligence, partner with job fairs, and Rapid Response events. Business service staff share information on business expansion and new employers to the area. All core partner business services will participate in the State efforts to expand apprenticeships and increase credentials utilizing the Governor Set-aside funds to meet workforce challenges and skill development.

Vocational Rehabilitation provides ADA consultation and receives many requests for disability etiquette training for employers which helps in interacting with colleagues, customers and people in the community. North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation assists ND business owners and employers in finding solutions to disability-related issues. Services are designed to maximize the productivity and potential of new hires, to help retain an existing work force and to provide research and the latest information on disability-related issues. VR, through the work of Business Specialists and VR Counselors, meets with local businesses to inform them of the service and support available to help them maintain individuals with disabilities in their workforce. VR's promise to business is to quickly assess the rehabilitation needs of their employees and efficiently complete all necessary and required documentation to provide the required rehabilitation service.

The local adult learning centers work with both JSND and VR to consult for business services to better align services and avoid duplication with employers.

E. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

In October 2018, the Workforce Development Council (the Council) produced a report of recommendations after a year of studying North Dakota's workforce opportunities and challenges. The recommendations fell within five themes, two of which focus on ways to engage educational institutions in order to prepare students for the workforce. The first theme is dedicated to addressing the technical skills gap.

Middle-skill jobs account for 60% of North Dakota's labor market. While these jobs have traditionally been in the energy, manufacturing, construction, and transportation industries, there is also demand in the healthcare, finance, and information technology industries. To address the current workforce shortage in these areas, the Council supported recommendations

to establish partnerships between education and industry and to connect secondary and post-secondary education, as well as to incentivize engagement through scholarships and relocation into North Dakota.

The following recommendations are connected to engagement with educational institutions and are endorsed by the Workforce Development Council:

ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS WITH EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY. A structured connection between state workforce resources, education, and industry is crucial to ensuring crisp alignment in educational programming and industry needs.

1. The Council recommends Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming be expanded to align with industry needs, including information technology and cyber-skills, as well as, increasing the capacity of the online delivery system to offer CTE courses in rural areas.
2. The Council recommends high school graduation requirements be jointly reviewed by the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and the Department of Public Instruction to allow for a technical pathway through high school, and technical career pathways be made available to all students as part of the career planning process discussed herein.
3. The Council recommends the current Operation Intern be remodeled to create the “Main Street Internship” by partnering education with industry through structured work-based learning opportunities to create focused internship experiences, including IT/Cyber Security, with learning parameters defined through a public/private effort. The framework, specifically designed for small business, includes: a) specified learning objectives; b) hands-on experience; c) applied learning project; d) virtual social networking; and e) a graduation event for main street interns.

CONNECT SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION. To ensure clear and efficient pathways to technical careers, secondary and post-secondary education must be tightly aligned and barriers to technical degree pursuit/attainment removed.

4. The Council recommends making competitive funding available to launch additional career academies to advance high-quality technical education, maximize resources, and incentivize collaborative partnerships between the state, the PK-12 system, community colleges and private industry.
5. The Council recommends continued and consistent collaboration between PK-12 and the NDUS to increase the articulation of CTE programs and to encourage technical pathways through high school with simultaneous degree attainment opportunity.
6. The Council recommends requiring consistency in dual credit agreements with NDUS and expanded state funding of dual credit awarded to high school students.
7. The Council recommends the stronger strategic and structural alignment of community colleges, CTE, Center for Distance Education (CDE), and TrainND in order to maximize and optimize existing resources for more focused and nimble technical skill education delivery systems.

PROMOTE EARLIER AND MORE DIVERSE CAREER EXPOSURE. Connecting students, and their parents, to technical education and career options at an earlier age is imperative to raising awareness of, and interest in, the wide variety of technical career options available today and in the future.

8. The Council recommends enhancement of today's PK-12 experience to include a framework for multiple points of infusion of age-appropriate career experience curriculum, field experience, and applied learning, along with parent engagement and a robust communication strategy.

9. The Council recommends supplemental best-in-class career exploration/exposure tools during the PK-12 experience, including partnerships with the private sector to develop and deploy a coordinated and systemic approach, including for example, hands-on "career experience" mobile units and production of a "day in the life" video series exposing students to technical careers to be suitable for use in both educational programming and workforce recruitment efforts of the public and private sector.

10. The Council recommends implementation of improved talent assessment/inventory and career planning tool(s) to meaningfully assist a student in becoming familiar with personal interests, traits, passions, gifts, and aptitudes to inform and guide career planning.

11. The Council recommends continued prioritization of career planning through aligned funding and incentives requiring a career plan for each student prior to entering ninth grade. To ensure alignment of developing career interests with an academic plan for high school, the plan is to be referenced and updated throughout high school.

INCENTIVIZE ENGAGEMENT AND AUTOMATION. Many other states, including South Dakota, have implemented tuition incentives with retention requirements to encourage students to enroll in technical career paths.

12. The Council recommends a partnership with industry and North Dakota community colleges to offer scholarships to students entering high-demand technical degree programs (repaid if the student leaves North Dakota within three years following graduation). Additional incentives to encourage relocation and permanence in North Dakota and differentiate from other states' competing programs should also be considered.

13. The Council recommends that digitization and automation of business processes be an important part of the solution to address the worker shortage by remodeling and reimplementing the "automation credit" eliminated during the 2017 legislative session. The credit should target industries with significant labor shortages and not be limited to manufacturing, should increase the tax credit, and should expand allowable investments to include, for example, consulting services to aid in automation of a manual business process.

The recommendations described in this section are designed to serve as a roadmap throughout the next several years as the Workforce Development Council, Governor's office, core program partners, education providers and legislature work to address diverse workforce needs in North Dakota. These recommendations have not been implemented yet, as plans for implementation and funding must be determined. It is also important to note that these recommendations may evolve as the state's workforce needs evolve.

F. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

With the highest labor market participation rate in the nation, North Dakota hiring managers participating in the 2018 North Dakota Workforce Survey indicate company growth is limited by the inability to hire and/or retain qualified staff, and yet, there are populations of North Dakotans who want and need to work, but experience barriers to entering the workforce.

Specifically, the Workforce Development Council (the Council) examined three broad groups of individuals who experience barriers to employment:

JUSTICE INVOLVED OR “RETURNING CITIZENS.” Many barriers stand in the way of successful employment for returning citizens including the lack of sufficient training opportunities prior to release. Following release, these citizens have a criminal history causing employers to overlook the potential worker without discernment for the age of, or nature of, the conviction. Potential employment is also impeded by occupational license restrictions precluding those with convictions from attaining a license for certain professions. With a fractional investment in skill training, job placement and support, the cost of incarceration could be reduced while mitigating other less direct, but no less significant, costs to society.

1. The Council recommends the development and implementation of a pilot re-entry training and support program called “GrAC” (pronounced “Grayce”) or “Grant Another Chance.” Through partnerships with private industry, incarcerated individuals are assisted with gaining work experience and job skills pre-release within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) facility and post-release through additional support. GrAC recognizes the complexity of post-release success, including issues of addiction, mental health, and the lack of skills to find adequate housing and gain and keep employment. Through a diligent screening process to identify incarcerated individuals most likely to succeed, program participants will receive services to include:

- Skill & credential attainment during incarceration;
- Employment coaching 60-90 days prior to scheduled release focusing on skills assessment, resume drafting, job searching, and interviewing;
- Follow up coaching at regular intervals post-release to ensure ongoing employment success; and
- Guided coaching to navigate attainment of other available support services to enable success post-release

Employers are involved throughout the pre-and post-release process, including an explanation of available support programs and incentives (e.g. WOTC).

2. The Council recommends expanding the capacity of Roughrider Industries, Inc. (RRI) through market expansion, leveraging the workforce, and through direct sales of goods to state employees. RRI trains and employs incarcerated individuals, teaching marketable skills including, but not limited to, metals and furniture manufacturing, sewing, and upholstery. RRI produces quality goods and services but is limited by state statute in how it interacts with the marketplace, including the requirement that RRI may only sell directly to governmental agencies and certain non-profit organizations. The ability for RRI to train and employ additional individuals is limited by the training and equipment that can be made available prior to release and the product it is permitted to sell, as RRI is a self-sustaining business model. Examples of ways in which to expand capacity of RRI include:

- Expansion of available training programs available prior to release;
- Expansion of RRI’s market to mirror thirty plus other states requiring the state to give preference to the correctional institution (CI) when purchasing goods;
- Leveraging RRI’s workforce by permitting RRI to enter into production contracts with purchasers provided bids include market labor rates; and

- Allowing sales of goods produced by RRI directly to state employees.

3. The Council recommends a change in the occupational licensing laws to model the Injustice for Justice model and, in relevant part, Arizona’s licensing law, preventing ex-offenders from being unnecessarily denied a license to practice a particular occupation.

Since 2015, sixteen states have reformed their occupational licensing laws making it easier for ex-offenders to find work in state-licensed fields.

- Seven states allow ex-offenders to petition a licensing board to determine if their record would be disqualifying, including prior to enrolling in training;
- Four states generally prevent licensing boards from using vague “moral character” standards for denying licenses to ex-offenders;
- Four states have instituted new requirements, requiring boards to report how many licenses are refused due to criminal convictions; and
- Ten states generally bar boards from denying licenses unless the applicant’s criminal record is directly related to the license sought.

4. The Council recommends a change to expungement laws to model Minnesota’s 2015 legislation, which provides new authority for expunging both criminal and juvenile records, requires data mining companies to observe expungements, and protects employers and landlords hiring and renting to individuals with expunged records.

- From 2016-2017, twenty-three states broadened existing second chance laws or enacted entirely new ones to improve the chance for successful re-entry and reintegration for many thousands of Americans, including:
- Restrictions on public access to records;
- Limits on employer inquiries into a criminal history;
- Record-sealing arrangements or relaxed eligibility requirements; and
- Supplementation of existing sealing or expungement laws to make relief available at an earlier date.

5. The Council recommends that the NDUS technical colleges explore partnering with North Dakota’s tribal colleges in the delivery of technical training at tribal college sites, including but not limited to utilization of online delivery systems to expand tribal college offerings.

USERS OF THE STATE’S COMPLEX STATE WORKFORCE SYSTEM. Along with providing services relating to the core mission of the state agencies utilizing the State Workforce System, each also provides skill-building and job-finding services and support. Citizens may access services of all (and other) programs but there is no systemic collaboration across the agencies resulting in citizen interaction with each agency to be a separate “transaction” and not connected. Thus, there is replication of services and opportunity for efficiencies across the agencies. The “state workforce system” includes state agencies, divisions, and departments that are funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) through the U.S. Department of Labor.

6. The Council recommends continuation of the current plan to physically co-locate Job Service North Dakota and Vocational Rehabilitation services across North Dakota.

7. The Council recommends a study to determine the advantages of structurally aligning North Dakota's workforce system to create a true "one-stop center" model, to maximize resources and optimize results for North Dakota job seekers.

8. The Council recommends rebranding Job Service North Dakota to better reflect the mission and services provided.

CITIZENS WITHOUT A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA. The GED is a gateway to better job opportunities through additional training and/or education. Expansion of Adult Education would permit more North Dakotans to attain a GED and create a pathway to better employment and further training. According to a recent study by Georgetown University, jobs and economic opportunities have significantly diminished for a person who lacks a high school degree, both in North Dakota and nationally. In contrast, those with a high school diploma and some additional training have access to significantly better employment opportunities. North Dakota's Division of Adult Education offers a path to a Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) for youth and adults who have not successfully completed a traditional High School Diploma.

9. The Council recommends an increase in Adult Education funding to increase service delivery capacity, contingent upon the expectation the Adult Education Division focus on:

- Increasing the volume of GED attainment;
- Developing and implementing a formal assessment and referral pathway from GED attainment to additional training and certification; and
- Expanding English Language programming to assist English Language learners.

In this same report, the Council also identified opportunities to address the shortage of nurses and healthcare technicians in North Dakota. A shortage of nurses compared to demand has existed to some extent for twenty-five years, and yet today's shortage is uniquely serious. The retirement of baby boomers, the aging population, and the associated increase in healthcare needs of our nation's largest generation has intensified the issue, leading to the need for more nurses and supporting healthcare workers across the state. The rural North Dakota landscape makes this shortage particularly acute due to the limited program capacity and distance. In fact, 35% of all North Dakotans live in a primary health-care professional shortage area with nineteen counties having critical numbers of RNs/APRN's.

MAXIMIZE ENTRY INTO NURSING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS. Throughout our university systems, some programs receive more applications than seats available; however, those turned away due to program capacity are not redirected to another nursing program at another university. This issue is aggravated by non-standardized application deadlines resulting in missed opportunities to maximize program space at other educational facilities. Adding to the diminishment of qualified candidates for these nursing programs is the confusion surrounding pre-nursing curriculum which is not standard across all programs. This results in applicants being unprepared for the program of their choice and possible delays in acceptance to a program.

10. The Council recommends implementing standardized application processes and systems through the development of one shared application allowing a student to apply for multiple programs at once (like that utilized by other high-demand NDUS programs) so program capacity is maximized, processes for the university and applicant are streamlined, and there is assurance the applicant receives consideration from multiple programs.

EXPAND PROGRAM CAPACITY. North Dakota has an insufficient number of qualified nurses to serve as clinical instructors creating a barrier to maintaining and/or expanding program capacity. The Higher Learning Commission establishes the requirements for higher education to receive accreditation on a regional and national level. Nursing faculty positions require a Master's or doctorate-level degree. There is little incentive for nurses to serve in these positions as nurse faculty in North Dakota are not paid significantly more than entry-level RN's and according to studies, work longer hours than an RN providing patient care. This challenge is exacerbated by the student loan debt that often accompanies advancement in education.

In addition to the faculty shortage, there is also a shortage of rural program sites. Data suggests nursing students tend to work near where they attend school. Although nursing programs are located throughout the state, newer models have found that smaller rural cohorts and non-traditional delivery systems located within health care facilities are effective in recruiting students who would not otherwise enroll and have higher completion and retention rates than other programs. These successful delivery systems include on-site learning labs in almost every aspect of the curriculum and create additional benefits through dual-roles enhancing student instruction.

11. The Council recommends developing a Rural Nursing Program (RNP) Grant by expanding the capacity of the rural cohort model whereby the educational program and healthcare facility jointly apply with the healthcare facility contributing a matching investment of cash or in-kind contribution (staff or facilities).

12. The Council recommends the RNP grant fund be used to fund the development of an online Associates Degree in Nursing (ADN) program as currently there are no online ADN programs offered in the state or nationally. The competitive nature of the grant, managed by the North Dakota Center for Nursing, will encourage cost effective start-up to ensure sufficient subject matter expertise and objectivity.

13. The Council recommends developing nurse faculty tuition support programs contingent upon retention to actively motivate nurses to attain the education required to serve as faculty. The grant is designed to support an additional fulltime and part-time faculty, as well as additional preceptors. The tuition support retention agreement requires commitment for a reasonable period of time, or whole/partial repayment of tuition.

The recommendations described in this section are designed to serve as a roadmap throughout the next several years as the Workforce Development Council, Governor's office, core program partners, and legislature work to address diverse workforce needs in North Dakota. These recommendations have not been implemented yet, as plans for implementation and funding must be determined. It is also important to note that these recommendations may evolve as the state's workforce needs evolve.

G. LEVERAGING RESOURCES TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

During the 2019 Legislative Assembly, the legislature passed HB 1171 which led to the creation of ND Career Builders, a scholarship and loan repayment program designed to drive students toward programs that will prepare them to fill in-demand jobs and to retain recent graduates who have accepted such jobs with North Dakota companies. The High-Need and Emerging Occupations List is at the foundation of this program as it establishes the occupations in ND that are in high demand. The Workforce Development Council (the Council) and ND Job Service establish the qualifying high-need and emerging occupations annually around July 1st. The

North Dakota University System (NDUS) and the Council map the qualifying occupations to qualifying programs, which may be certificates or degrees earned from qualifying ND institutions.

The length of the identified qualifying programs is unique to the scholarship and to loan repayment. Qualifying programs for the scholarship are those of around 4 semesters or 6 quarters or less in length. Qualifying programs for loan repayment may be any certificate or degree from a ND institution, provided it relates to one of the high-need and emerging occupations.

Making the ND Career Builders scholarship and loan repayment program unique, is a partnership between the state and private-sector business, whereby for each dollar of private support received, the state will contribute a dollar of public funding. All recipients of this funding must commit to living and working in North Dakota for three years.

On a larger scale, the North Dakota workforce development and training system receives Federal and State funding support, and in many cases matching funds are also provided by the private sector. WIOA funds are used to help leverage other Federal fund sources such as Pell Grants and student loans and State funded scholarships such as the North Dakota Academic or Career and Technical Education Scholarship. North Dakota workforce partners have become accustomed to making the most out of limited funds. Collaboration between partners is strong and leveraging funds is a necessity. Co-enrollments of participants are encouraged to maximize the total resources available for preparation of the workforce to meet employment needs. Collaboration among WIOA core programs, SCSEP, Trade Act, business and industry, the North Dakota University System, TrainND (state funded customized employee training), Career and Technical Education (Carl Perkins), refugee services, foster care providers, the State Penitentiary system, and many more partners will result in: Expanded awareness and leverage of programs/funds designated to serving targeted populations, often served by multiple entities; Rapid development and deployment of programs and activities unique to economic and employment needs for North Dakota's workforce; Access to increased numbers of persons in need of assistance, including low skilled, low income, individuals with disabilities, disaffected youth, veterans, dislocated workers, and individuals residing in high unemployment areas, including American Indians.

H. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS

WIOA training funds expand access to postsecondary credential by providing training opportunities to low income, New Americans, disabled individuals and dislocated workers. Occupation areas such as healthcare career ladders of nurse assistant, licensed practical nurse and registered nurse offer career pathways and credential earning opportunities.

Transportation occupations offer increased wages and opportunity based on skills and endorsements earned. Welding occupations require a variety of skills and certifications to work in specific areas. Information Technology occupations require specialized certifications to address the state's various needs for data security and maintenance. The ND eligible training provider list offers many certifications to expand skills for these in demand occupations in the State.

The ND Eligible Training provider list provides information on training program credentials and credential types. The information also includes whether the completed training further requires

an industry test for credential. Program staff are knowledgeable and inform participants of the options and the steps to follow to pursue credential attainment.

The Workforce Development Council has established an in-demand occupations list for North Dakota in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The list includes occupations determined to have a current or potential impact on the state's economy. The list includes occupations where training results in needed industry credentials. North Dakota Labor Market Information's 2016-2026 long-term employment projections and US Bureau of Labor Statics were used by applying the following factors: Average annual wages (entry level), Average annual wages (overall), Competitiveness, 2016 Employment, Absolute employment growth, CAGR employment growth, and Annual job openings. <https://www.jobsnd.com/sites/www/files/documents/jsnd-documents/indemandoccupationslist.pdf>

The Department of Commerce applied for and received an Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant. This grant will create a program which helps statewide companies in the state's primary industries and those businesses looking for qualified seekers filling in-demand occupations. The program will offer classroom and online training through North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS). NDSCS has a long tradition of providing responsive, accessible, and flexible training solutions that include their current apprenticeship programs. NDSCS has curriculum currently approved with the Department of Labor and will be expanding their offerings to meet the growing needs in healthcare and manufacturing industries.

This program will upturn the current North Dakota apprenticeship usage. By working with students, parents, groups which represent under represented populations, and NDSCS – this approach will engage individuals to start a pipeline for industry and draw from. Youth will build a familiarity with the apprenticeship model as will those looking for a career change. Individuals working full-time will also become aware of the opportunity to change or start career paths without incurring student loan debt.

VR provides outreach to high schools to provide services to students with disabilities. As part of this effort, potentially eligible and eligible transition students are provided with vocational guidance and counseling which includes job exploration as well as opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education.

Adult learning centers will improve access to post-secondary programs in the following ways: A partnership is being discussed with the ND University System and the Bank of ND to ensure public and private post-secondary recruiters are present at all adult learning centers and that students attend to learn about programs and services including financial aid; Approximately half of current adult learning centers are housed in community college settings; strategies to increase post-secondary access have included scholarships to GED recipients, discounts on books, supplies and fees, first semester scholarships and improved orientation methods to allow students to observe classroom activity, meet with staff and current program students; and, Creating partnerships with employers to offset costs for credentials and certifications.

The Department of Commerce will sustain efforts to work closely with employers, education entities and the State Director of U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship after expending the Apprenticeship Accelerator funding. Department of Commerce staff will work initially with employers to facilitate the process of standard writing and orientation to the Registered Apprenticeship processes. Commerce staff will also work with AJC business services staff to assist with promoting Registered Apprenticeship and WIOA programs and will train AJC staff on using the DOL Standards Builder tool.

I. COORDINATING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Economic development entities, Job Service, and Adult Education have a long history of collaborating with efforts to address workforce needs in the state. North Dakota continues to experience workforce shortages statewide across all industries throughout the state. Job Service is a valuable and willing partner for career awareness events such as regional and local career expos, job shadowing, and internship promotion events. The Adult Learning Centers across the state partner with Job Service in hosting these events for Adult Education students, as well as promoting participation in the Job Service events mentioned above.

Attracting workforce continues to be a huge need in the state and economic development partners coordinate efforts for large job fair events. Job fairs are planned jointly between Job Service AJC staff, chambers of commerce, and community EDC's. The recruitment of employers and promotion of the events are shared responsibilities. EDC staff assist during job fair events and greet and welcome employers and job seekers. Each region of the state holds multi industry job fairs that target the specific needs of local employers. Job Fair events can provide opportunities for as many as 90 employers to connect with up to 750 job seekers at a single event. Employers find these recruitment events extremely beneficial and often times hire needed employees on the spot. Adult Education students are encouraged to attend the regional events. When attracting workforce is an issue, building a workforce from underutilized populations can be a solution. An underutilized population in ND that Adult Education can assist with is those citizens with no high school diploma or high school equivalency

Local EDCs throughout the state have started or continued their own recruitment campaigns in ND. The Bismarck/Mandan EDC has a campaign called "Make Your Mark" and it showcases employment opportunities in the capitol city. The website, <http://bmda.org/make-your-mark>, promotes the benefits of living in the Bismarck-Mandan area and to the top left of the website are the employment opportunities with a link to the jobsnd.com website and second are the area profiles generated by the Job Service Labor Market Information department. Not to be out done, the Grand Forks EDC has started the "Way Cooler Than You Think" campaign that shadows what the Bismarck-Mandan EDC is doing. <https://grandforksiscooler.com>. It is clear having Job Service collaboration with these initiatives adds value and increases results. Job Service employment opportunities are promoted through additional Economic Development websites in Grand Forks and Fargo who have links to the state job bank, the Virtual One Stop. This resulted in Job Service coordination between Geographic Solutions and the EDC entity to make it happen. In Northeast ND, an unmanned aerial systems (UAS) feature jobs report is distributed to promote opportunities at Grand Sky, America's first business and aviation park.

Job Service participates in many activities that support economic development around the state. Established sector groups hold manufacturing roundtables to jointly discuss industry challenges and find solutions, one challenge is recruiting workforce. Job Service staff offers the services available to assist with labor exchange, training opportunities and labor market information. Adult Learning Centers across the state benefit from the support of economic development supplied by Job Service. Adult education is also connected to and supportive of the economic development initiatives. The unique partnerships and communication that exist between Adult Learning Centers and business are expanding and this is creating an environment that is conducive to IET and IELCE partnerships.

A labor market study in the Greater Fargo/Moorhead area indicated the critical need for workforce in the highest populated area in North Dakota. Job Service staff assisted in conducting the survey and continues to assist in establishing and executing initiatives on three subcommittees; Attract, Build and Innovate. The study specifically included utilizing the New

American population as a workforce pool. Job Service, local economic development staff and other community stakeholders in Fargo and Grand Forks areas are working together to find ways to overcome language barriers and cultural differences to meet the needs of employers. Adult Education plans a role in assisting the New American population in Grand Forks via the Grand Forks Adult Learning Center (ALC) and the ESL program.

Local Job Service AJC and Adult Education staff engage and collaborate with many county Job Development Authorities in their localities and staff are members on their boards. All locations in North Dakota are experiencing workforce shortages and collaborating with these local entities assist with recruitment of workforce and offer training resources. One Job Service Employer Committee remains in North Dakota and has continued due to the benefits of collaboration for this value added agriculture and manufacturing community.

Job Service AJC, Adult Education, and VR staff partner with local EDC in a variety of ways. A number of AJC managers are members on the EDC boards. Job Service AJC staff participate in EDC strategic planning meetings, workforce study planning, provide labor market information and regional employment issues such as workforce shortages and child care. Partnerships are developed to collaborate to ensure the success of new employers who open their business. This assistance includes recruiting workforce, posting job orders and resume searches. Joint meetings are held with entrepreneurs and new employers who are looking to locate or expand their markets to the area and receive information on the workforce resources and financial incentives available. Financial incentives may include WOTC, WIOA and state tax incentives. County and city demographics are shared as well as supply and demand information.

Job Service AJC staff participate in sector strategies with the following industry groups; Tech Connect IT Sector, the Health Tech Trade Steering Committee and Manufacturers Roundtables.

Job Service AJC staff partner with city EDC's to connect area students to careers. Arranging job-shadow days in February is a way to introduce industry and employers to provide career exploration. This effort includes local EDC's, area high schools, community colleges and universities to provide a 4-6 hour job shadow to area students. Job Service AJC staff and EDCs partner to promote local employment and careers through the EDC sponsored Career Counselor Week. Career counselors hear presentations about local economic development, employment opportunities and labor market information to use with their students.

EDC's depend on the involvement and resources from Job Service AJC and VR management and staff to conduct annual statewide Career Expos. Career expos feature hands on employer exhibits and break-out sessions on career exploration and pathways. Economic development staff consider this a collaborative workforce retention strategy and educates attendees about career opportunities and related training needed. Adult Education Directors are aware of the events are strongly encourage staff and students to participate.

Throughout the state, a good number of Job Service management, Adult Education, and VR staff are members on their local chamber of commerce and subcommittees. An example is the Chamber Agriculture Committee working with businesses to promote agriculture and agricultural related businesses in Southwest North Dakota or Military Affairs to sustain partnerships with the two Air Force Bases in the State, Young Professionals groups and Business Training committees. Job Service AJC and VR staff frequently provide LMI information and participate in area Leadership courses. Core Program staff strengthen relationships with area chamber members by participating in Business after Hours events, area Human Resource committees and Downtowners Associations. Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Group membership is a strong business relationship builder through ribbon-cutting and ground-

breaking ceremonies to celebrate grand openings, new locations, expansions and milestone accomplishments of Chamber members. Finally, Job Service staff exhibit at university career recruitment events making soon-to-be graduates aware of North Dakota opportunities.

1. THE STATE OPERATING SYSTEMS THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES. THIS MUST INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF-

Job Service utilizes Geographic Solutions products as the operating system for labor exchange, case management and labor market information. The labor exchange function is linked from jobsnd.com to the job listing site that provides fast access to a database of thousands of jobs. Job Spidering, a powerful online tool that captures job listings from other sources including corporate web sites, online newspaper listings, and other private job boards is one of the features included. Spidered jobs are added to internal job listings to provide seamless access to thousands of job openings. Employers benefit from having job openings viewed by the largest applicant pool in North Dakota and the ability to view similar listings for wage and benefit comparison. Job seekers benefit by having the largest single portal in North Dakota to access job openings for all occupations. Jobsnd.com has the largest pool of job openings in the state.

The Job Service case management system is also a Geographic Solutions product and is utilized for all registrations, enrollments and data entry for the Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. The case management system is linked to the labor exchange system and tracks participant activities. The Trade Act program activity is incorporated into this system. The system provides ease for dual enrollment and seamless case management. Each participant has an enrollment summary that captures the activity from the multiple programs and case managers can quickly ascertain the current status and plan for future recommendations to achieve employment goals. All case notes are centralized which provides a cohesive picture of a participant's activity over multiple programs. Document imaging was incorporated into the case-management system. Documents required for monitoring and data validation are stored electronically. Case managers have a procedure manual that provides technical assistance for data entry, data validation and system use.

Geographic Solutions is the vendor for North Dakota's labor market information. Jobsnd.com includes the link to North Dakota's Labor Market Information website (NDLMI). NDLMI is a next generation internet application bringing together diverse stakeholders through an expanded data collection and data mining effort. NDLMI generates, compiles, disseminates and publishes the state's leading economic data and labor market information—from wages to projections to the latest employment figures—resulting in better-informed economic decisions. NDLMI has the most extensive network of economic data resources in the state, maintained by experienced research analysts meeting high statistical standards.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AWARE (Accessible Web-Based Activity Reporting Environment) is NDVR's internal, web based, fully integrated, comprehensive case management software system designed for public vocational rehabilitation agencies. AWARE is hosted by the State of North Dakota Information Technology. Staff within the VR program possess the requisite skills and program knowledge to support the administration of AWARE. This group exchanges information about the system and recommends system's modifications to its vendor Alliance Enterprise.

ADULT EDUCATION The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education program, operates a statewide student management data system known as LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System) for every student served. Used since 2010, this comprehensive web-based program allows each adult learning center, as well as the ND

Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, to enter standard demographic, assessment, attendance, class hours and other relevant related data into a real time structured system. All core program operating systems have been updated to gather required Participant Information Record Layout (PIRL) data.

Job Service receives a data file generated from Geographic Solutions from all program information. Job Service sends this file to SWIS and uses the file to match against North Dakota wage records. The results from SWIS and the state's wages are combined and sent back to Geographic Solutions. The wage results are incorporated into the data file and returned to Job Service. This file is used to generate the WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, VETS and Trade Act federal reports through the WIPS.

Vocational Rehabilitation AWARE can be customized to include data elements unique to NDVR's business plan and to produce specialized reports. The agency uses AWARE to track service delivery, case service funds, usage and outcomes. The agency further uses AWARE to track services provided through contracts with local school districts and providers to students age 14-21 engaged in pre-employment activities. Pre-employment activities to this group follow the required cores service funded through 15% of the agencies federal VR grant. Students' engagement in pre-employment service can be tracked and their activities achieved in AWARE. Web-based and real time reports are available to all staff with access to AWARE, both remotely and at itinerant locations. Counselors and managers can view a variety of data and information, including budgets, production activities and "activity due" reports. The RSA-113 and RSA-911 reports produced for RSA are generated directly from AWARE.

Adult Education - The LACES system is self-hosted and delivers high-quality results and streamline data reporting to state and federal agencies. Training is annually required on feature use and data evaluation. This student data management system is used by all entities providing Adult Education under WIOA in ND. Customized alerts allow staff to track multiple data fields, including follow up. Multiple queries are readily available, as is a dashboard feature for each program to 'self-assess' progress in key areas. The State Office has access to all program data and conducts a quarterly data analysis of each local program for progress, accomplishments and challenges. State and local program staff use LACES to track service delivery and outcomes.

All core program operating systems have been updated to gather required Participant Information Record Layout (PIRL) data.

2. THE STATE POLICIES THAT WILL SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S STRATEGIES (E.G., CO-ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND UNIVERSAL INTAKE PROCESSES WHERE APPROPRIATE). IN ADDITION, PROVIDE THE STATE'S GUIDELINES FOR STATE-ADMINISTERED ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO A ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

The Workforce Development Council Policy 2-07-01 Co-Enrollment Policy and Procedures is in place primarily for programs administered by Job Service ND; Title WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker, Wagner Peyser, Trade Act, and JVSG. For example, Job Service ND requires co-enrollment of Trade Act Recipients whenever they receive assistance or services from WIOA Dislocated Worker. North Dakota's Virtual One-Stop case management module records and provides a comprehensive view of offered services and eliminates duplication. The Virtual One-Stop case management module contains fields to indicate co-enrollment with required partners such as Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and SCSEP service providers.

The North Dakota Co-Enrollment Policy states:

Purpose: To inform all one-stop career center staff of the procedures for co-enrolling eligible customers in the Wagner-Peyser program and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I program. The Virtual One Stop case management module records and provides a comprehensive view of offered services and eliminates duplication.

Background: The North Dakota Unified State Plan states that North Dakota will co-enroll one-stop customers in partner programs. Co-enrollment policy and process is as follows:

Co-Enrollment of Trade Act Eligible Participants Eligibility will be determined during the certification process by the Trade Act representatives. TAA participants will be co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program at the time of training enrollment.

Co-Enrollment of JOBS Participants TANF E & T participants may be co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser based on the need for career services. WIOA Adult program co-enrollment will be determined based on individual assessment and need.

Co-Enrollment of BEST Participants SNAP E & T participants will be automatically co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. WIOA Adult program co-enrollment will be determined based on individual assessment and need.

Co-Enrollment of PRIDE Participants (TANF funded) PRIDE participants will be automatically co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. WIOA Adult program co-enrollment will be determined based on individual assessment and need.

Co-Enrollment of UI Claimants UI claimants, who are required to have a work search, will be automatically co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. WIOA Dislocated Worker program co-enrollment will be determined based on individual assessment and need.

RESEP participants co-enrolled in WIOA Title I programs will be determined at the time of the RESEP assessment/orientation.

Co-Enrollment of Adult Education Participants Adult Education participants will be co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I based on referral information and collaborative plan between program case management staff and instructors, individual assessment and need.

Co-Enrollment of Vocational Rehabilitation Participants Vocational Rehabilitation participants will be co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I based on referral

information and collaborative plan between program case management staff and counselors, individual assessment and need.

Co-enrollment within WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth) Programs Participants may be co-enrolled within all WIOA Title I programs based on fund eligibility and on individual assessment and need.

North Dakota is a single area state. There is only one local funding mechanism. The North Dakota Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) is attached as an addendum to the One-Stop Delivery System Memorandum of Understanding. The IFA states:

Infrastructure Funding Agreement American Job Center infrastructure costs are defined as non-personnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of the American Job Center. The cost categories are listed in the chart below. All Parties to this Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) recognize that infrastructure costs are applicable to all required Partners, whether they are physically located in the American Job Center or not. Each partner's contributions to these costs, however, may vary, as these contributions are based on the

proportionate use and relative benefit received, consistent with the Partner programs' authorizing laws and regulations and the Uniform Guidance. The Partners are identified in the Cost Allocation Methodology section of this agreement. The schedule of the Infrastructure Funding Agreement will begin each calendar year, January 1 through December 31.

Cost Allocation Methodology

Job Service North Dakota administers several of the WIOA core and required partners. The agency cost allocation plan is used to cover Infrastructure costs. Partner programs administered by Job Service North Dakota are WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Trade Adjustment Act, Unemployment Insurance and Unemployment Insurance funded Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments program. Job Service North Dakota administers a portion of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) employment and training and TANF funded Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment program through contract from the Department of Human Services. All staff overhead charges are applied to infrastructure costs. The partner programs physically located in an American Job Center will have square footage usage determine in the lease which factors in the infrastructure costs. Leases will be paid on a monthly basis. The partner programs not physically located in an American Job Center will have benefit determined by co-enrollments and available tallied customer orientations. See the chart for program details.

Partners	Method to determine benefit	Resources
WIOA Title I (Dislocated Worker, Youth & Adult)	Staff FTE's and Customers	Overhead portion of staff charges
Wagner-Peyser (employment services)	Staff FTE's and Customers	Overhead portion of staff charges

Partners	Method to determine benefit	Resources
JVSG (VETS)	Staff FTE's and Customers	Overhead portion of staff charges
Trade Act	Staff FTE's and Customers	Overhead portion of staff charges
Unemployment Insurance	IP addresses and UI ICE login's Square footage for UI Tax staff	RESEA Overhead portion of staff charges, FAIRA and UI Admin
Adult Education	of co-enrollments with Wagner - Peyser staff assisted services & WIOA Title I	Adult Ed Admin funds
Vocational Rehabilitation	of co-enrollments with Wagner - Peyser staff assisted services & WIOA Title I	Program funds
TANF	Staff FTE's for JOBS & PRIDE of co-enrollments with Wagner - Peyser staff assisted & WIOA Title I	Overhead portion of staff charges, Admin Funds

Partners	Method to determine benefit	Resources
NFJP (Farmworker Program)	of co-enrollments with Wagner - Peyser staff assisted services & WIOA Title I	Admin and Program funds
Job Corps	Square footage and of co-enrollments with Wagner- Peyser staff assisted services & WIOA Title I and onsite orientations	Program funds
SCSEP (Older Worker Program)	of co-enrollments with Wagner- Peyser staff assisted services & WIOA Title I	Admin and Program funds
Perkins-Post Secondary (Career & Tech Ed)	of co-enrollments with Wagner- Peyser staff assisted services & WIOA Title I	Admin funds

CSGB and HUD employment and training, YouthBuild and the Second Chance Act programs are not present in North Dakota. The Indian & Native American programs will not be participating in the Infrastructure Funding Agreement according to WIOA sec. (h)(2)(D)(iv).

Cost Reconciliation

All Parties agree that a semi-annual reconciliation of budgeted and actual costs and update of the costs and benefit determinations will be shared by Job Service North Dakota. An invoice will be prepared for each Partner with the actual costs allocable to each Partner in accordance with the following process:

- Job Service ND will submit the invoices to the Partners and send a copy of the updated budget to all Parties no later than forty-five (45) days after the end of the calendar year.
- Upon receipt of the invoice and adjusted budget, each Partner will review both documents and will submit payment to Job Service North Dakota no later than fifteen (15) days following receipt. Payment of the invoice signifies agreement with the costs in the adjusted budget.
- Partners will communicate any disputes with costs in the invoice or the adjusted budget to Job Service North Dakota in writing.

Steps to Reach Consensus

All Parties agree that the steps to reach consensus for this IFA will be the same as described in the Dispute Resolution section of the MOU. Partners will make a concerted effort to negotiate the IFA along with the remainder of the MOU, including the overall operating budget, for the North Dakota American Job Center network.

3. STATE PROGRAM AND STATE BOARD OVERVIEW

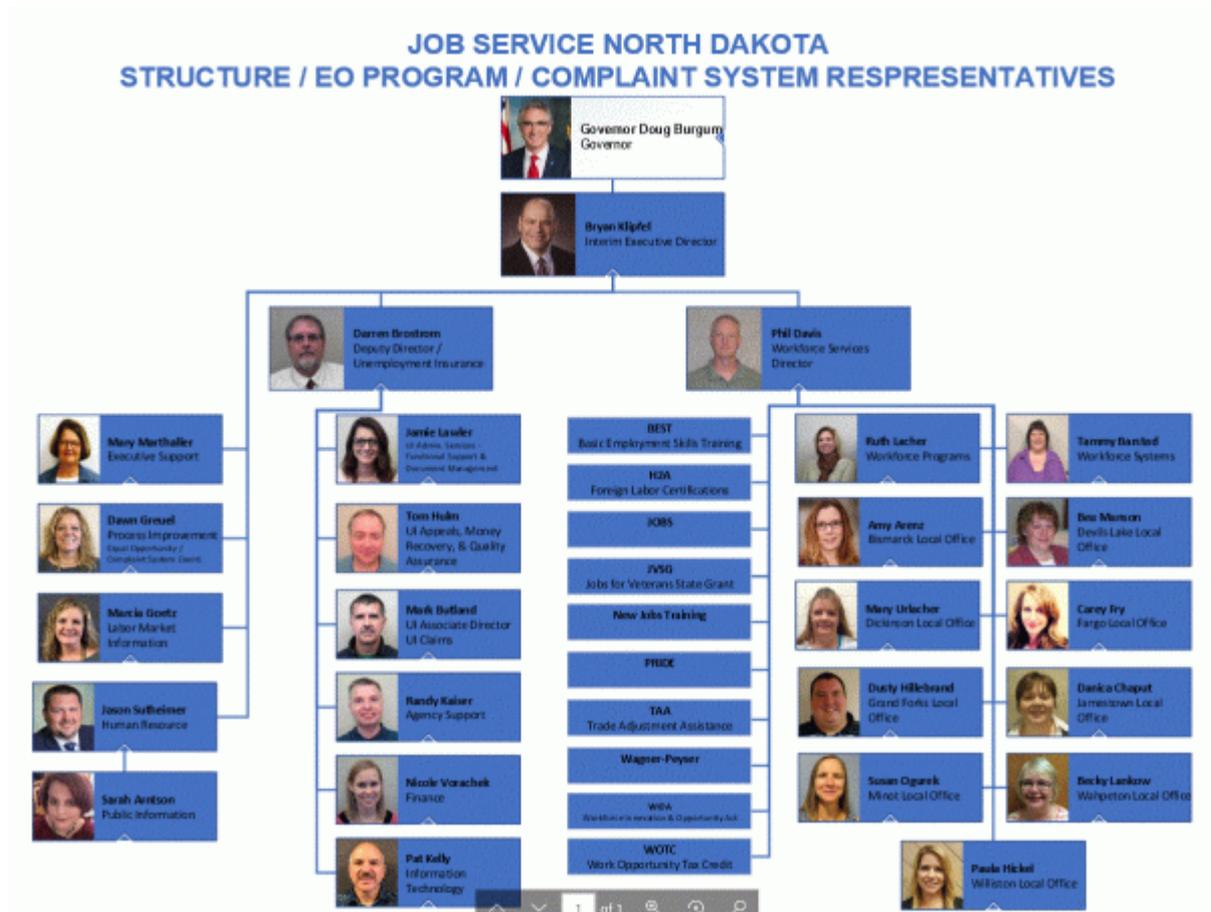
A. STATE AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Titles I and III of WIOA are administered by Job Service North Dakota.

Job Service's history is rooted in the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 and the Social Security Act of 1935 and is the WIOA one-stop operator providing employment and training services to workers, job seekers, youth and businesses. Job Service administers the unemployment insurance program, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Trade Act, TANF employment and training

and a TANF discretionary program, SNAP employment and training, and two state programs including incumbent worker training. Job Service houses the Labor Market Information center.

The Job Service ND organizational chart:



Title II of WIOA is administered by the Department of Public Instruction. Superintendent oversees everyone in the department. Each office has a Director, Adult Education program exists in the Office of School Approval and Opportunity (SAO). The Assistant Director of SAO is currently the State Director of Adult Education and also the GED State Administrator. North Dakota is split into eight regions and there is a Regional Provider of Adult Education in each region. Each Regional Provider has a site Director. <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/about-us> (WIP)

Title IV of WIOA is administered by the Department of Human Services. The organizational chart may be viewed here, <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/wioa/docs/WIOA-Org-Chart.pdf>

I. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

Governor Doug Burgum

Senator Randy Burckhard

Representative Cynthia Schreiber-Beck

Patrick Bertagnolli, Rough Rider Center

Jason Ehlert, ND State Building & Construction Trades Council

Senate Appointment

Representative Appointment

Business

Labor

David Farnsworth, Great River Energy	Chair, Business
Tifanie Gelinske, Greater Fargo-Moorhead EDC	Business- Economic
Cindy Griffin, Midwest AgEnergy Group	Business- Value Ad Ag
Tony Grindberg, Commissioner, City of Fargo	City County
Dr. Mark Hagerott, North Dakota University System	Education
Lyn James, Mayor, City of Bowman	Chief Elected Official
Timothy Johnson, UPS Management	Business- Supply Chain
Nathan Joraanstad, Bushel	Business- IT
Jan Kamphuis, Sanford Health	Business- Healthcare
Kurtis Karn, Discovery Benefits	Business- IT
Janelle Klinke, Goldmark Property Management	Business
Bryan Klipfel, Job Service ND	WIOA Core Program
Michelle Kommer, Commissioner, Department of Commerce	Workforce
Landis Larson, ND AFL- CIO	Labor
Perry Lubbers, Trail King Industries Manufacturing/Transportation	Business-
Keith Lund, Grand Forks Region EDC	Business
Matt Marshall, MinnKota Power Cooperative	Business- Energy
Guy Moos, Baker Boy	Business- Manufacturing
Stanley Schauer, Department of Public Instruction Adult Education	WIOA Core Program
Wayde Sick, Career & Technical Education	CTE
Don Shilling, General Equipment	Business- Heavy Equipment
Taya Spelhaug, Microsoft	Business
Arnie Strebe, Department of Human Services	Vice Chair, Workforce
Robyn Throlson, Vocational Rehabilitation	WIOA Core Program
Erica Thunder, Commissioner, Department of Labor & Human Rights	Workforce
James Upgren, Department of Public Instruction	Education
Kasper Ziegler, United Brotherhood of Carpenters	Labor

Included within our existing Workforce Development Council roster is apprenticeship management from both industry and a training provider. Mr. Shilling employs apprentices in his company, General Equipment, and Mr. Grindberg works with apprenticeship programs through his role at the North Dakota State College of Science.

II. BOARD ACTIVITIES

The Workforce Development Council meets a minimum of quarterly and is briefed by the Director and core program staff of the requirements in WIOA. The State Board under Governor Burgum has been given a specific responsibility for workforce strategic planning. Executive and Administrative committees meet more frequently and have greater responsibilities for creating agendas, completing assignments to further move initiatives of the identified strategic plans, and to provide insight on use of Governor's Set-Aside funds. This planning will utilize data and establish measurable outcomes to quantify success. The Council discusses recommendations and provides approval on policies concerning their responsibilities. Each meeting provides the status of each core program's outcomes towards negotiated performance levels.

In October 2018, the Workforce Development Council presented a report of 38 recommendations designed to address North Dakota's workforce challenges to Governor Burgum. Since that time, the Council has formed three subcommittees which meet monthly to prioritize the recommendations, develop strategies for moving them forward, and to identify potential partners to engage throughout the process. Each subcommittee has been tasked with building strategies to accomplish the goals in one of the following areas from the original report: 1) Recruiting and retention of workers; 2) Addressing opportunities for the populations with barriers to employment; and 3) Focusing on the career exposure and technical skills gap. Two additional subcommittees are being created and will focus on developing a communication plan and educating citizens throughout the state on the initiatives developed by the Council, and occupational licensing reform. The existing subcommittees started meeting monthly in October 2019 and the new subcommittees will follow suit once they are formed. The subcommittees receive administrative assistance and guidance from the Director and provide status reports to the full Workforce Development Council at quarterly meetings.

4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS

A. ASSESSMENT OF CORE PROGRAMS

North Dakota is a single workforce area.

Job Service ND staff conducts annual monitoring of the WIOA programs at the Job Service AJCs. WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth files will be sampled and reviewed for compliance with federal WIOA regulations, and Job Service WIOA policy and procedure directives. All documents required for monitoring and data validation are stored electronically within the document management module of GSI. Results and recommendations of the monitoring are reviewed with the Job Service AJC managers and supervisors. A written report identifying deficiencies and recommendations for improvement is disseminated response and, as warranted, corrective action. This monitoring enables WIOA managers and supervisors to readily see how well the Job Service AJCs are performing in case management and where improvements are needed.

Desk reviews include regular monitoring of participant WIOA expenditures. The process of monitoring expenditures includes pulling a sample of payments from all the quarterly payments made on behalf of WIOA participants. Case managers forward the source documentation used to justify the payments in the sample. The results of the review are documented and compiled in a formal report and disseminated to the WIOA managers and supervisors for response and, as warranted, corrective action.

WIOA data element validation verifies the accuracy of WIOA participant data used to generate the WIOA performance reports. An official report on the results of the WIOA data element validation review is issued each year. The ND Department of Public Instruction and the Adult Education program have several levels of internal assessment. A developed work plan is

reviewed and approved by DPI management each biennium as part of the budget process; state funds are allocated to align to the work plan goals and tasks. Quarterly reviews of the work plan and accomplishments are completed between the Director and management. The review includes fiscal, program data, local program data and general program oversight.

The State Adult Education staff monitors each local program, at least, every 3 years and more often if there is a new director, a previous finding or upon request. The onsite monitoring covers 17 areas of program and fiscal authority and involves multiple staff. Desk audits performed via LACES and GED Analytics are performed randomly and typically occur, at least, every two months.

Federal performance indicators are also part of the Director annual review process and a determination of performance. Additionally, each local program is also assessed on its individual performance indicators. The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains a comprehensive program evaluation system with various components: • Consumer record of services review • Grantee oversight • Evaluation of service providers • Customer satisfaction • Performance measures monitoring

Data for program evaluation is collected using various methods, including surveys (telephone), public forums, site reviews, grant reports, client record reviews, client comment forms, a statistical system and program standards and performance indicators. This information is analyzed by management; if appropriate, it is shared with staff, service providers, grantees, federal funding agencies, legislature, clients and others. The analysis is used to assess unmet consumer needs, improve services and to guide the Division in planning its future focus and direction. Additionally, the information is used to assess and forecast the training needs of the Division's staff. Performance indicators have traditionally included: Change in Employment Outcomes • Percent of Employment Outcomes • Competitive Employment Outcomes—a primary indicator • Significance of Disability—a primary indicator • Earnings Ratio—a primary indicator • Self-Support • Rehabilitation Rate

Collectively, the core partners share performance measures and annual outcomes with the Governor's Workforce Development Council.

B. ASSESSMENT OF ONE-STOP PARTNER PROGRAMS

North Dakota is a single workforce area.

It seems in the previous State plans that ND has submitted, assessment of core programs, individually, passed or qualified for the assessment of the one-stop partner programs. As in years past, the ND WIOA core team members shall convene quarterly moving forward. These meetings will be used to build collaboration, a unified vision, align local and regional planning goals, as well as build a yearly report of qualitative and/or quantitative data (to include negotiated targets/projections on meeting). The yearly report will be reviewed and approved by the Workforce Development Council-Administrative Committee. The plan is to develop and implement this assessment system by July 1, 2020. This work is in addition to the assessment and evaluation that happens at each core program level, and it will be a summation of this work as well as the overall arc. The quarterly meeting will function like through-year or interim assessments with the yearly submission acting as the summative.

C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Each core program has different assessment methods in terms of effectiveness (as listed above), with some commonalities in overall shared quantitative goals. The new plan of assessing the effectiveness of our one-stop, mentioned in III. b. 4. B., will provide another set of assessment

results to use for continuous improvement and future data decision planning. We will use 2020-2021 as a baseline year as we implement the assessment plan. We do not have much for previous assessment results because no system assessment method was in place. We believe there are pieces, but nothing sewn together enough to constitute, what we gathered, as standard. In summary, our previous assessment results as a one-stop are null and we will build, in the upcoming year, to make the entire assessment process meaningful.

D. EVALUATION

Once again, we see evaluation at two different levels. Each core team is evaluated multiple ways in their effectiveness and at the team level, i.e. federal year end reviews, federal negotiations, legislative sessions, yearly state reports, and interim share outs, etc. However, no real state evaluation was occurring at the state-system level. The exact working mechanics of the evaluation process will be developed. The entity, WDC administrative committee, will be utilized to review and approve this system of evaluation for the one-stop system. The core team members will use assessment results and the better organized longitudinal data to propose future projects, ideas to bring core team closer together as a system, and ensure alignment with state, regional, local needs. The overall goal is to better serve our clients, participants, and students of ND. The simple act of convening again will trigger improved coordination and cross-team work, also involving an arm of the State Board in the assessment and evaluation process to better inform and fashion further inclusion. Proposed ideas and best practices will be shared with the previously mentioned entities through the yearly submission, the ideas and best practice will incubate during the bi-annual or quarterly core team meetings. Once we get a better idea of where we are at as a system, we will know which projects to research and where to focus possible resources.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

A. FOR TITLE I PROGRAMS

I. YOUTH ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 128(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

For Title I programs, North Dakota is a single State local area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act of 2014 as designated by Governor Doug Burgum. Job Service North Dakota is designated by the Governor as the WIOA Fiscal Agent, Grant Recipient and State Administrative Entity. The Job Service ND Executive Director is designated as the WIOA Liaison. The WIOA Youth activities are provided by Job Service North Dakota through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Development Council and Job Service North Dakota.

II. ADULT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) OR (B)(3)

For Title I programs, North Dakota is a single State local area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act of 2014 as designated by Governor Doug Burgum. Job Service North Dakota is designated by the Governor as the WIOA Fiscal Agent, Grant Recipient and State Administrative Entity. The Job Service ND Executive Director is designated as the WIOA Liaison. The WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services and Training are provided by Job Service North Dakota through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor, the Workforce Development Council and Job Service North Dakota.

III. DISLOCATED WORKER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH WIOA SECTION 133(B)(2) AND BASED ON DATA AND WEIGHTS ASSIGNED

For Title I programs, North Dakota is a single State local area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act of 2014 as designated by Governor Doug Burgum. Job Service North Dakota is designated by the Governor as the WIOA Fiscal Agent, Grant Recipient and State Administrative Entity. The Job Service ND Executive Director is designated as the WIOA Liaison. The WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services and Training are provided by Job Service North Dakota through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor, the Workforce Development Council and Job Service North Dakota.

B. FOR TITLE II

I. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL AWARD MULTI-YEAR GRANTS OR CONTRACTS ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS TO ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS IN THE STATE, INCLUDING HOW ELIGIBLE AGENCIES WILL ESTABLISH THAT ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS ARE ORGANIZATIONS OF DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education Program, held a competition to distribute AEFLA funds for the 2017-2018 program year. The ND Governor's Workforce Development Council, which serves as the only state WIB sought statewide fund distribution via a regional service delivery model to maximize service delivery statewide. Each regional site will determine the delivery of satellite programs within the respective region. A (historical) formula method was used to determine the amount of funding based upon region population, unemployment rates and other distinguished factors (past performance of core indicators, EFL gains) to be determined prior to the competition and RFP development. The ND Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is the State's eligible agency for adult education and literacy programs and responsible for administering funds and providing program/performance oversight to local program grantees. Adult education and literacy eligible providers approved under WIOA requirements will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2020, as long as the eligible current providers adhere to State and federal grant expectations as measured through annual applications, financial reports, and program performance reports. Funding was made available on a three year cycle to provide adult education services. After implementation of services, providers will apply on an annual basis for continuing funding under Title II.

A new competition is currently being developed with a revised Request for Proposal (RFP). Some slight changes were made to the document and process, but for the most part the process and the document will remain the same. The cycle for this round of the competition will be four years (PY 2019-2020 through 2022-2023), with providers applying for funding annually as apart of the funding/grant process. The regional service model remains, and growth of satellites is expected in areas of need (funding dependent). Establishing a strong method of ensuring eligible agencies meet demonstrated effectiveness was a priority. An audit of the first competition found this aspect of the competition did not meet standard. In the upcoming competition, demonstrated effectiveness will be used as an eligibility requirement and this will be clearly stated. The two ways in which an eligible provider can meet the stated requirements are explained in the RFP. Two years of past data are to be used meet the stated requirements and the requirements being used satisfy applicants who have and also who have not been previously funded by AELFA. The competition is slated to start December 20th, 2019 to have all process of the competition completed and funding ready by July 1, 2020.

II. DESCRIBE HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS TO APPLY AND COMPETE FOR FUNDS AND HOW THE ELIGIBLE AGENCY WILL ENSURE THAT IT IS USING THE SAME GRANT OR CONTRACT ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR ALL ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS

The ND Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education program directly funds its grants and contracts and does not use or fund a sub-State entity to conduct a competition. The agency will use the same announcement, application and process for all applications as is required in WIOA and ND Century Code; the required involvement of the agency procurement officer is to ensure that all applications are treated in the same manner and with consistent processes; that application processes are clearly written and nonnegotiable. Direct application will be the required norm. DPI procurement processes ensures direct access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in ND. Eligible applicants under Section 231 of WIOA will submit applications to the agency. RFPs for all programs competed were awarded under WIOA sections 225: corrections; 231: eligible providers; and 243: integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. The announcement and posting of the competition and RFP document will be done via the States procurement page that is accessible by all eligible applicants.

C. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

The Rehabilitation Act, allows states to operate as a “combined” agency serving individuals regardless of their disabilities. The act also allows states to operate two separate VR agencies, one agency for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and a “general” agency for individuals with all other disabilities. North Dakota VR program, authorized as title IV of WIOA is designated as a “combined” agency serving individuals regardless of their disability.

6. PROGRAM DATA

A. DATA ALIGNMENT AND INTEGRATION

North Dakota has integrated data elements for WIOA Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser within Job Service. There is no plan to integrate an exchange of common data elements with Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education. Job Service data and Adult Education data can be gathered through the ND State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) for evaluation purposes. Since Vocational Rehabilitation is not included in SLDS, Vocational Rehabilitation will provide data on request for evaluation purposes. Assessment information is shared between the three agencies through release of information processes.

Currently, all partners are satisfied with their data systems and are diligent about sharing information across partner programs. Additionally, the Workforce Development Council and all partner programs (with the exception of Vocational Rehabilitation) utilize the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). SLDS adds to the shared knowledge produced by each individual partner program’s data system and highlights job opportunities throughout the state. This information is beneficial to all programs and the populations they serve. Together, the Workforce Development Council and program partners are able to provide diverse, yet aligned, workforce data assessment to the governor’s office through a combination of data collection tools. This system works well in North Dakota given the close collaboration and partnership that exists between Job Service North Dakota, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Public Instruction, and Department of Commerce.

North Dakota has integrated data elements for WIOA Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser within Job Service. There is no plan to integrate an exchange of common data elements with Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education.

North Dakota has integrated data elements and intake for WIOA Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker and Wagner-Peyser within Job Service. There is no plan to integrate an exchange of common data elements with Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education. This integrated system serves many unemployed individuals. Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education are

encouraged to refer participants to utilize Title I and Wagner Peyser programs to receive career services and training services when appropriate to improve service delivery and reduce duplicative effort.

Currently, all partners are satisfied with their data systems and are diligent about sharing information across partner programs. Additionally, the Workforce Development Council and all partner programs (with the exception of Vocational Rehabilitation) utilize the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). SLDS adds to the shared knowledge produced by each individual partner program's data system and highlights job opportunities throughout the state. This information is beneficial to all programs and the populations they serve. Together, the Workforce Development Council and program partners are able to provide diverse, yet aligned, workforce data assessment to the governor's office through a combination data collection tools. This system works well in North Dakota given the close collaboration and partnership that exists between Job Service North Dakota, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Public Instruction, and Department of Commerce.

Job Service, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation will submit reports required under section 116, performance accountability separately. Job Service will submit reports for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Wagner-Peyser.

B. ASSESSMENT OF PARTICIPANTS' POST-PROGRAM SUCCESS

North Dakota's lead agencies will use the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance to assess the immediate progress of participants from core programs. North Dakota's lead agencies will comply with federally directed WIOA evaluations and will on occasion conduct evaluations of longer term outcomes for program participants. Such evaluations will include impact studies that will assess a participant's employment status, earnings or educational achievement beyond the established timelines that are incorporated into the WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance.

North Dakota will utilize the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), a series of secured data warehouses comprised of historical education and workforce training data, to assess WIOA participant post-program success. The objective of the SLDS is to provide data on the outcomes of North Dakota education and workforce training programs. Job Service ND through a partnership with ND Information Technology Department and ND Department of Public Instruction received a federal Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant in 2010 to develop a Job Service ND warehouse (workforce) separate from the K12 warehouse. ND Information Technology Department is responsible for building and managing the warehouse on behalf of Job Service ND. SLDS data will be used to illustrate how the workforce activities affect future earnings. SLDS data from Job Service ND wage tables, North Dakota University Systems, Department of Public Instruction and Department of Human Services provides the capability to track participants and to determine employment, education activity and credential attainment.

C. USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) WAGE RECORD DATA

North Dakota will use a WDQI data warehouse which is populated daily to utilize UI wage data for WIOA requirements. This data base, as well as SWIS data, will be the sources for wage data for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law.

D. PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS

Job Service North Dakota, Vocational Rehabilitation, through the Department of Human Services, and Adult Education, through the Department of Public Instruction have signed data sharing agreements with the State Longitudinal Data System. These agreements will include the necessary safeguards as required in section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

7. PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR VETERANS

Job Service AJCs offer priority of service to all covered persons who access the workforce system. Covered persons will be identified at point of entry to allow them to take full advantage of priority of service. Customers entering a Job Service Office will be queried in the customer reception area (point of entry) to ascertain covered person status. A “quick assessment” guide will be used by staff. A customer that self-attests to be a veteran or spouse of an eligible veteran (covered person) will be offered the opportunity to step to the front of the line and receive services before a non-covered customer. At that time, the covered person will be made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, employment and training services available and eligibility requirements for available employment and training services.

Covered persons utilizing self- service will be made aware of entitlement to priority of service at the time of their registration in the Virtual One Stop (VOS). Once the customer identifies themselves as a covered person, a screen automatically displays information on entitlement to priority of service and programs and services that are available through Job Service North Dakota.

Job Service AJC staff will conduct an intake/assessment for each Veteran/Eligible Spouse at point of entry to a Job Service AJC. Throughout the intake process, Veterans who disclose or self-attest as a veteran with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) or meets other eligibility requirements for DVOP services, will be referred to a DVOP. If a DVOP is not available when a referral is necessary, the Veteran/Eligible Spouse may choose to be served on a priority basis by another staff member.

Veterans not meeting the criteria for DVOP services are to be referred to appropriate non- JVSG staff to receive core, intensive, and/or training services on a priority of service basis.

Job Service will monitor priority of service to veterans/eligible persons to ensure that all staff are in compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements regarding all Department of Labor programs. Priority of service will be monitored through analysis of data found in the Employment and Training Administration’s Federal Reports, from observations annotated in the DVOPs Monthly Report on Services to Veterans and from reports completed by Job Service Systems Management Staff. These reports are reviewed by the Job Service Workforce Development Director, the State Veterans’ Program Administrator and the Director of Veterans’ Employment and Training and conclusions drawn regarding the extent of priority of service demonstrated by each Customer Service Area. Process improvement plans are recommended for those offices needing improvement.

8. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Compliance with section 188 of WIOA and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act is met through the submission of the Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunity Plan to the US DOL Civil Rights Center.

Job Service North Dakota (JSND) is committed to providing equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, veteran status, or because of any other characteristic protected by applicable laws. This commitment extends to all aspects of our work in both the employment relationship and with our clients applying to or receiving services under our programs.

Individuals with disabilities receive aid, benefits, services, and training equal to, or as effective as, those provided to others and will not receive separately unless it is needed. Should the need arise, we will ensure services are received in the most integrated setting possible.

Employees serving participants in our programs complete nondiscrimination training annually to ensure awareness and understanding of EO policies and regulations, and adherence to our internal policies with recognizing and responding to complaints of discrimination.

JSND and its core partners provide equal access to our facilities and services and discrimination against an individual, for any reason, is prohibited. We provide facilities which are accessible to all individuals by public transportation, driving, or walking. The One-Stop identifier is clearly displayed on all facility locations to ensure our buildings are clearly recognized. We operate our facilities during optimal hours to meet the needs of our customers, including both job seekers and employers. Where possible, we have co-located with our partners and to allow for additional meeting space for partner programs.

JSND is committed to ensuring accessibility to our programs, services, and technology.

The JSND website operates from a platform created by the North Dakota Information Technology department (NDIT), a state agency. JSND's online service is a web-based self-service system offering universal access to a broad range of employment, training, and educational services. With assistance from NDITD, we ensure our website is in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. NDIT conducts routine compliance checks of the website and takes steps to improve site performance for users with slow and limited connections.

Our online platform ensures:

- Access to specific services is available to all customers throughout the one-stop delivery system
- Access to 24/7 services to anyone with Internet access
- Access to services by clients in remote and rural areas who prefer to access services online vs. at a physical location
- Access to services by clients in urban areas who are unable to access a physical location due to lack of transportation, a disability, or for other reasons

JSND provides participation in our programs and services to individuals with disabilities that are as effective as that provided to others. Qualified individuals with disabilities receive aid, benefits, training, and services which are equal to, or as effective as, that provided to others. We ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities in employment and employment-related training, including making reasonable accommodations to our facilities, policies, practices, and/or procedures to avoid discrimination on the basis of a disability.

In furtherance of our commitment to provide services to qualified individuals with a disability and remove barriers often experienced by hearing or visually impaired individuals, or individuals with a physical disability, our resource rooms are furnished with adjustable

workstations which have wider access areas, adaptive technology, and adjustable height work surfaces which can be operated either electronically or hydraulically.

Our modern adaptive technology includes a phone amplifier, ear-covering and noise-cancelling headphones, 24" monitors, and teletypewriters. As needed, we will employ additional resources or seek outside consultation, to ensure our clients have access to our services. Employees at our facilities have been trained on the use of the equipment, and training is integrated into our process for any new adaptive technology.

In addition to the One-Stop Certification which ensures compliance with several programmatic components, JSND also has a designated Equal Opportunity Officer to ensure we, along with our Core Partners, remain in compliance with adhering to our Non-Discrimination plan, and the provisions of the ADA. Utilizing a periodic monitoring system, annual reviews for compliance are conducted to identify any disparity in services provided to individuals who are classified within a protected group. Additional auditing of services may occur in the event of complaints received by participants within our programs.

Each of the nine one-stop locations has a certification review once every three years. This certification review includes an assessment of program effectiveness and continuous improvement including accessibility of services, equal opportunity, and employee training. The facility is also reviewed for compliance with the provisions of the American's with Disabilities Act and specifically addresses parking, entrance areas, resource rooms, restrooms, and general public spaces including an assessment of carpeting, signage, doors, controls, and elevators.

We are committed to ensuring accessibility to our facilities and services and we prohibit discrimination against individuals for any reason. To solidify our commitment, we have made written assurances on our website, in our Non-Discrimination Plan, and in written notifications to all clients, participants of specific programming, and to the general public. These assurances also extend to our partner agencies and providers.

9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Job Service makes every attempt to ensure the needs of customers with limited English speaking skills are met. To provide interpretation services in a timely manner, Job Service uses CTS Language Link interpreter services and partner agencies interpreting services. Job Service partners with the Adult Learning centers to provide the needed education to the various ELL populations across the state. Job Service staff refer WIOA, Wagner Peyser, and other state program participants to the nine Adult Learning Centers that are located in the same cities as the nine AJCs. ALC staff partner with community agencies that specifically serve New Americans like Lutheran Social Services/New Americans, Afro American Development Association, New American Consortium for Wellness and Empowerment Center. The case managers then provide the proper follow-through to ensure our participants are provided the very best language education possible.

On a yearly basis, staff are trained to properly use the CTS Language Link and attend New American specific training through Lutheran Social Services/New Americans entitled Building Bridges.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

North Dakota core partners established an electronic file with access for all plan writing team members. The team began meeting in October of 2019 and met weekly to review, modify and collectively write the Unified Plan. The team of six included staff from Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Commerce, and Job Service ND.

- North Dakota Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Robyn Throlson, Interim Director and Planning and Evaluation Administrator
- ND Department of Public Instruction, Adult Education – Stanley Schauer, Assistant Director of School Approval and Opportunity, Adult Education State Director
- ND Department of Commerce/Workforce Development Council – Katie Ralston
- Job Service North Dakota, Workforce Programs - Ruth Lacher, Manager of Workforce Programs, Tammy Barstad, Manager of Workforce Systems, and Phil Davis, Workforce Services Director. Ruth, Tammy, and Phil represented all core and partner programs administered by Job Service ND, including Title I-B, Title III, and Trade Adjustment Assistance, Labor Market Information, and JVSG.
- The required partners included Career & Technical Education, TANF and SCSEP. The Governor’s office was consulted regarding the State strategy for workforce. The Department of Commerce Workforce Division also provided information regarding the State strategy for workforce. The Administrative Committee of the Workforce Development Council met to review and provide input to the Unified State Plan on January 23, 2020. The public comment period for the WIOA Unified Plan, the Agriculture Outreach Plan and the proposed performance measures will be completed by March 1, 2020.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (FOR ALL CORE PROGRAMS)

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	Yes
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public;	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
(b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;	Yes
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;	Yes
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);	Yes
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and	Yes
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.	Yes

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER, AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE I-B

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. REGIONS AND LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

North Dakota is a single workforce area under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 as designated by Governor Doug Burgum. The North Dakota Workforce Development Council serves as both the State and local board as outlined in WIOA.

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This statement, including the Appeals Process is included in the MOU and the Infrastructure Agreement signed by one-stop partners.

The One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is the recognized vehicle for the Board to implement an agreement among the one-stop partner programs regarding one-stop delivery of services in the local workforce development area. North Dakota is a single area state.

To facilitate consistency and transparency in determining costs for One-Stop services, the Title 1 Administrator will prepare the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and provide copies to one-stop partner programs and the WIB. Questions or issues regarding the IFA will be provided to the Title 1 Administrator and Board staff for resolution, if necessary.

The IFA must address cost sharing and infrastructure costs in a fair and equitable manner consistent with all policies and procedures. A review of the IFA will be conducted with an eye toward equitable cost sharing among partners, including a consistent approach to in-kind costs.

Appeals Process

This appeals process is in accordance with section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA.

Step 1. As one-stop partners are negotiating the IFA, if difficulty in reaching agreement or an impasse has occurred a one-stop partner may appeal the negotiated amount for their agency by notifying the Title I Administrator in writing immediately in order to direct an appeals resolution team to provide technical assistance and finalize a solution. This notification should occur within 30 days.

This appeals resolution team will be comprised of agency-designated staff with decision-making authority from each of the partner agencies working toward a local agreement and shall include a staff member from the workforce board.

Step 2. If the appeals resolution team is unable to finalize a solution within 30 days of notification by local partners, the appeal is forwarded to the Governor who will make final determinations on the terms of the IFA for those program partners over which he has decision-making authority and will impose a cost sharing arrangement.

Job Service ND must provide the appropriate and relevant materials and documents used in the negotiations to the Governor, preferably at the time of the notification of failure to reach consensus or request for appeal resolution, but no later than ten (10) business days thereafter. At a minimum, Job Service ND must provide to the Governor:

- The Local WIOA plan,
- The cost allocation methodology or methodologies proposed by the Partners to be used in determining the proportionate share,
- The proposed amounts or budget to fund infrastructure costs,
- The amount of Partner funds included,
- The type of funds (cash, non-cash, and third-party in-kind contributions) available (including all documentation on how Partners valued non-cash and third-party in-kind contributions consistent with 2 CFR 200.306),

- Any proposed or agreed on American Job Center budgets (for individual centers or a network of centers), and
- Any partially agreed upon, proposed, or draft IFAs.

Job Service ND may also provide the Governor with additional materials that they or the Governor find to be appropriate.

2. STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

The State shall follow all applicable Federal and State regulations and guidance pertaining to the use of each individual fund source for workforce investment activities as set by North Dakota Office of Management and Budget fiscal policies.

(<https://www.nd.gov/omb/agency/financial/fiscal-policies-and-guidelines>)

North Dakota utilized statewide funds to support the co-location effort of DVR moving into our Devils Lake and Grand Forks AJCs. This was a 10-month long process that built on an already strong relationship between JSND and DVR. Statewide funds cover the cost of a document management module for the Job Service ND case management system to attach digital documents to client records for easy access and reference. Staff have the ability to store and view documents associated with a user record. A document management module reduces dependence on paper documents, improve information availability, increase information security, and business continuity. Efficiencies are gained during data element validation with reduced travel costs and time spent by staff traveling around the state.

Job Service does not receive state general funds for statewide activities.

The WIOA compliant State Board, the Workforce Development Council, is continuing its work in identifying the state's workforce initiatives and priorities. Two of the bigger priorities that are being looked at are recruitment/retention and combating the various barriers to employment like addiction, justice involved, homelessness, etc. Sub-committees are continuing to work on these subjects and this will comprise much of the future strategic planning activity of the Workforce Development Council. Once North Dakota's workforce priorities are identified through the Workforce Development Council and the Executive Committee, Governor Set-Aside funds will be utilized to implement workforce initiatives and strategies in the state.

The Dislocated Worker Office (DWO) of Job Service has been designated by the Governor as the entity responsible for providing Rapid Response services through the Job Service AJC Managers' direct supervision and provision of these services. WIOA funding is utilized for Rapid Response services. The local Chief Elected Official is the Governor who is informed of dislocation notifications and planned Rapid Response activities. The Governor maintains an ongoing option to become involved with larger dislocations per his/her or Job Service's request. When the DWO receives Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices, the Governor and the ND Department of Commerce are notified immediately via the Job Service Executive Director. WARN notices are shared immediately with Job Service AJC staff and Unemployment Insurance. Depending on the level of community impact, communication may occur between local and/or state level service providers to inform them of the potential to assist in tailoring and delivering Rapid Response and in serving impacted workers. In the case of WARN notices, the community's chief elected official also receives a notice from the company. A Job Service AJC representative contacts that community leader as a part of planning the response effort. In the case of non-WARN dislocations, this contact is dependent on the situation's local area impact. Following

either a permanent closure, mass layoff or a natural/other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation, Job Service AJC office managers have the responsibility for initiating Rapid Response in their administrative areas as warranted. When the DWO receives a WARN notice, immediate contact is made with the Job Service AJC office manager/designee to initiate contact for Rapid Response with the employer and employee representatives if organized labor is involved. However, and in most cases, the AJCs have first-hand knowledge of the proposed layoff prior to the WARN notice being issued. The DWO notifies and utilizes partners (Department of Public Instruction, Department of Career and Technical Education, Department of Commerce, Department of Human Services, North Dakota University System, Veterans Employment and Training Service, local Economic Development Corporations, ND Building and Trades Council, ND AFL-CIO, ND Petroleum Council, Associated General Contractors, various Manufacturing Roundtables, etc.) as appropriate when any dislocation notification is received. The Job Service AJC office manager or designee coordinates the response effort and works with the DWO to determine the level of involvement of the chief elected official, economic development officials, and others. In many Rapid Response scenarios, these services are delivered seamlessly by Wagner Peyser, WIOA, and UI staff members. External partners also participate and offer their perspectives and services. The Rapid Response plan has many facets which may include the following:

- Offering information on business start-up, growth and layoff aversion as a common service to all employers during regular employer visits or to anyone upon request.
- Exploring the potential for a task force which involves community leaders, company management, state leaders and representatives, organized labor, etc.
- Guiding a team in determining specific assistance to be provided at the dislocation site. ND is in the enviable position of experiencing a labor shortage, which sets the tone for directing the dislocated workers' attention to their transferable skills.
- Sharing information (in case of layoffs resulting from foreign competition) regarding petition filing, timing, and availability of TAA, Trade Readjustment Assistance, and the Health Coverage Tax Credit.
- Meeting with impacted employees to inform them of programs and available services (including scheduled activities, and special workshops which may include basic computer training) as well as answer questions and providing standardized dislocated worker information packets. Agendas cover a full range of topics reflecting a fully integrated service delivery system.
- Encouraging employers and employees to begin using services immediately rather than waiting until the layoff date.
- Arranging reverse job fairs onsite with employers with a scheduled closure or a large layoff.

When a dislocation is reported to the DWO, the occupations and locations of these workers are listed in a management report to notify staff around the state of this talent pool. Ongoing proactive efforts exist within the various areas of the state through cooperation between Job Service AJC staff members and economic development. When a layoff is pending, opportunities to help transition those impacted workers to expanding and new North Dakota businesses are effectively coordinated in order to retain a skilled workforce. For businesses in other stages of the economic cycle, assistance from outside resources is offered as well as information on recruitment services, unemployment insurance, workforce training, First Link 2-1-1 Network, business tax incentives, and North Dakota New Jobs Training program. Job Service's Management Information System includes a list of all Rapid Response sessions linking individuals applying for WIOA and TAA. All WIOA and TAA participants can be properly reported as having attended Rapid Response session(s) associated with the impacted employer.

In the event of a natural disaster, Rapid Response would be provided following an activation from the Workforce Coordination Center(WCC). North Dakota follows WCC Standard Operating Procedures which is a joint emergency effort among Job Service ND, Human Resource Management Services, North Dakota Workforce Safety & Insurance and the North Dakota Department of Labor. The WCC is part of The North Dakota State Emergency Operations Plan of

the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services, Division of Homeland Security. State agencies will be required to focus their attention on both the continuation of essential services and emergency response/recovery operations for the well-being of citizens; hence, non-essential services will likely be placed on hold until the severity of conditions requiring activation of the WCC subside. Current economic systems require limited inventories and minimal excess capacity. As such, relatively small surges in demand may overwhelm supply chain operations causing shortages of consumer goods and supplies, which may be critical to sustaining essential services to populations impacted by disasters. The WCC plan outlines protocols for redirecting the workforce to support delivery of essential services and emergency response/recovery operations.

Coordination and re-assignment of state, local and private workforce resources will be accomplished in conjunction with Job Service, Human Resource Management Services, N.D. Department of Labor and Workforce Safety & Insurance staffing assignments. Specified Tasks:

- Make decisions regarding state response and use of state resources supporting delivery of essential services
- Ensure WCC representation in the State Unified Command
- Document and adhere to decision points and triggers for activation of the WCC
- Make WCC staffing assignments
- Develop assessment procedures and prioritize essential services
- Ensure coordination with the Governor's Office to review and implement necessary human resource staffing procedures and/or policy changes
- Identify, train, prepare, deploy, and account for agency personnel essential to continuity of operations (e.g. staffing of essential service positions, sustaining emergency operations, staffing WCC, providing liaisons, equipment operators, support personnel, etc.)
- Identify, prepare, preposition as required, deploy, account for, and maintain readiness of equipment necessary for the continuation of essential services
- Establish and maintain relationships with private industry

Implied Tasks:

- Maintain listing of WCC staffing needs
- Maintain listing of available work force
- Provide guidance to state agencies for emergency or disaster related re-assignment and policy concerns
- Coordinate efforts to ensure Continuity of Government and operations pursuant to the state agencies' Continuity of Operation Plans
- Conduct a needs assessment
- Maintain Situational Awareness and conduct Intelligence/Information management (gathering, analysis and interpretation of info/intel) of the spread of infectious disease and resulting impacts
- Support key statewide, local, and tribal essential services, as well as public awareness campaigns to encourage volunteers
- Communicate needs to voluntary agencies
- Coordinate volunteers
- Provide command and control of, and ensure interoperable communications with, state resources
- Conduct deliberate planning individually as agencies, and as a collective state team, to ensure thorough readiness for emergency operations, to include provisions for prioritizing and sustaining essential service operations goods and supplies, which may be critical to sustaining essential services to populations impacted by disasters. The WCC plan outlines protocols for redirecting the workforce to support delivery of essential services and emergency response/recovery operations. Coordination and re-assignment of state, local and private workforce resources will be accomplished in conjunction with Job Service, Human Resource Management Services, N.D. Department of Labor and Workforce Safety & Insurance staffing assignments. Rehabilitate and repair resources such as equipment and personnel to ensure readiness to sustain essential service operations
- Identify and compile after action review data
- Provide liaison with private industry to coordinate and address appropriate responses during catastrophic events where severe disruptions occur in the availability and distribution of critical resources
- Develop media strategies and informational material with subject matter experts.
- Ensure coordination of message development and information with other agencies. In the event of a disaster, local Rapid Response staff will meet with key affected employers and community leaders to learn the scope of the impact in terms of approximate numbers, duration of work

cessation, and needs of the workers and businesses at various stages of the event. Following this analysis, Rapid Response staff members will contact partner agencies to update and request involvement in the Rapid Response process. Examples of partners who address immediate basic needs such as heat, shelter, food and clothing are the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Department of Health and Department of Human Services, National Guard, and FEMA. Rapid Response will be tailored and conducted as a team effort by the working partners to address the short, medium and long term needs. Temporary co-location of working partners will occur to simplify and expedite service delivery. When affected workers are eligible for Disaster Unemployment Insurance the Rapid Response team will provide assistance to file these claims. Job Service ND can temporarily assign staff from other locations (AJCs) to meet the influx of unemployed individuals. Following either a permanent closure, mass layoff or a natural/other disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation, Job Service AJC office managers have the responsibility for initiating Rapid Response in their administrative areas as warranted. When the DWO receives a WARN notice, immediate contact is made with the Job Service AJC office manager/designee to initiate contact for Rapid Response with the employer and employee representatives if organized labor is involved. The DWO notifies and utilizes partners (Department of Public Instruction, Department of Career and Technical Education, Department of Commerce, Department of Human Services, North Dakota University System, Veterans Employment and Training Service, ND Building and Trades Council, ND AFL-CIO, etc.) as appropriate when any dislocation notification is received. The Job Service AJC office manager or designee coordinates the response effort and works with the DWO to determine the level of involvement of the chief elected official, economic development officials, and others. In many Rapid Response scenarios, these services are delivered seamlessly by Wagner Peysner, WIOA, and UI staff members. External partners also participate and offer their perspectives and services. The Rapid Response plan has many facets which may include the following:

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- Sharing information (in case of layoffs resulting from foreign competition) regarding petition filing, timing, and availability of TAA, Trade Readjustment Assistance, and the Health Coverage Tax Credit.
- Meeting with impacted employees to inform them of programs and available services (including scheduled activities, and special workshops which may include basic computer training) as well as answer questions and providing standardized dislocated worker information packets. Agendas cover a full range of topics reflecting a fully integrated service delivery system.
- Encouraging employers and employees to begin using services immediately rather than waiting until the layoff date. Arranging reverse job fairs onsite with employers with a scheduled closure or a large layoff. The Rapid Response team will remain in place to assess ongoing needs in the community. Job Service ND will assess each situation to determine if a Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant is necessary.

Rapid Response in North Dakota operates in essentially the same manner regardless of whether a TAA petition or certification is involved. See Section 2 (B) above for the description of Rapid Response activities. Rapid Response services are provided to all worker groups covered by a TAA petition similarly to any worker group that has been or will be permanently laid off. In most cases, the State and its local Rapid Response team are already aware of a dislocation event and Rapid Response activities are underway before a TAA petition is filed. If a TAA petition is the first notice of a dislocation event, the State will notify the Job Service AJC staff, who will

contact the employer to plan and schedule the Rapid Response. When Rapid Response is extended to potentially TAA-eligible worker groups, basic TAA Program information must be shared, including the Program enrollment process should certification occur. If the State does not have access to the worker group prior to layoff, the State will use UI claimant information to identify potentially affected workers. In this situation, the local Rapid Response team will be required to extend outreach to the laid off workers using contact information obtained from UI. At minimum, the outreach materials must include information about the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, workforce system, services available at the AJCs, and basic information explaining the TAA Program.

B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. WORK-BASED TRAINING MODELS

On-the-Job Training (OJT) remains a training strategy for participants who lack experience but have education or training related to the job, or whose limited experience does not qualify them for the jobs. Increased promotion and outreach has resulted in additional OJT experiences for job seekers and employers.

Employers benefit from OJT through cost savings for the expense of training a new employee. OJT gives employers the control to design a training plan that meets the needs of their business. Supervisors assess progress over a period of time making it easier to identify and resolve a problem quickly. Trainees benefit from OJT by receiving an income while learning in jobs matched to their aptitude, abilities, and desired occupational goals. Trainees obtain hands-on training for new job skills and re-enter the workforce. Trainees may develop mentoring relationships leading to greater success in their new employment.

2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

North Dakota apprenticeships have, up until recently, been used traditionally by the skilled trades industries. Over the past year, other industries have started to recognize the value the apprenticeship model can provide to train and retain potential and current employees. In 2019, the Department of Commerce received a grant to aid in the expansion of Registered Apprenticeships. Funding will be used to help companies create new apprenticeship programs, in addition to supporting those who are working to sustain and/or grow existing programs.

The state is collaborating with the US DOL Office of Apprenticeship in North Dakota to coordinate information, expansion and eligibility of apprenticeships in North Dakota. Entities will share outreach information that enhances collaboration to result in increased WIOA and Registered Apprenticeship enrollments. Core program staff have received training from the State Director and the ETPL provides important information on utilization of Registered Apprenticeship. The state continues to strengthen partnerships between the State Director and other WIOA partners. Registered Apprenticeship has been incorporated into Job Service ND applicant services and business services within the WIOA core programs. These communications consist of establishing processes to share information that will generate more utilization of Registered Apprenticeships in the state. Increasing the knowledge of all parties about how WIOA can partner with Registered Apprenticeship will strengthen the promotion. Department of Commerce and Job Service North Dakota staff will share employers who are inquiring about Registered Apprenticeship and are in need to fill apprenticeship openings. Job orders in the labor exchange system are flagged as Registered Apprenticeship openings. A quick search for the flagged job openings for registered apprenticeship is on the homepage of the state's labor exchange website.

All Job Service staff, including WIOA program case managers, have the list of current Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to become familiar with the activity in the State for employer and occupation targets for program promotion. Business service staff messaging with employers will include Registered Apprenticeship benefits. Youth case managers are promoting Registered Apprenticeship specifically for out-of-school youth and as a strategy to meet the WIOA Youth 20% expenditure rate for work experience activities. Registered Apprenticeship promotional materials will be made available to all Job Service ND staff, on the agency webpage and in the resource rooms.

3. TRAINING PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE

ELIGIBLE TRAINING PROVIDERS POLICY 2-06-01 (2) PURPOSE: A. Training Providers

ETP Policy displayed for public and stakeholders: <https://www.jobsnd.com/workforce-development-council/governance>

The draft policy has been updated and, once reviewed and approved by the board will be posted to jobsnd.com.

Subject to ETP List Requirements The following types of training providers are subject to the ETP list requirements in order to receive WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide training services to eligible adult and dislocated worker individuals through Individual Training Accounts (ITA). ITAs may also be used for WIOA Title I Youth funds to provide training to older, out-of-school youth (ages 18-24). 1. Institutions of higher education that provide a program of training that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential; 2. Public or private training providers, including joint labor-management organizations, and occupational/technical training; and 3. Providers of adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with occupational skills training. Postsecondary institutions located in Minnesota, Montana, and South Dakota are eligible to receive North Dakota ITAs based on reciprocal agreements. Post-secondary institutions outside of North Dakota that offer online training/distance education may be authorized to receive ITAs as long as the training program is listed on the home state's ETP list and the program leads to an occupation on North Dakota's In Demand Occupations List. Upon request, Job Service North Dakota will review a program from another state to verify the program leads to an approved in demand occupation for North Dakota and that the program has been vetted for WIOA standards within the home state. B. Training providers new to the list may submit an application for initial eligibility, which can be granted for up to one full program year (July 1 – June 30).

1. Applications for the ETP list will be completed.
2. Training provider applications must include verification documentation that the training provider is licensed, certified, or authorized by the North Dakota Department of Higher Education, or the relevant state agency with oversight, to operate training programs in North Dakota. If a program is not in compliance with the oversight agency as required by state law, the provider will not be able to apply for inclusion on the ETP list until they meet the necessary requirements. If a provider is in compliance with the oversight agency, the provider can proceed to with the application process.
3. Training providers applying for initial program eligibility must provide the following with the application: a) A description of each program of training services to be offered; b) Information on cost of attendance, including costs of tuition and fees; c) Whether the training program leads to an industry- recognized certificate or credential, including recognized post-secondary credentials; d) Whether the provider has developed the training in partnership with a business

(and the name of the business); e) The in-demand industry sectors and occupations that best fit with the training program; f) The type of credential attained by all students in the program; g) Social security numbers (SSNs) for all students in the programs listed on the application, regardless of the funding source. NOTE - SSNs will be used to generate the required annual WIOA wage and employment performance reports. Job Service ND will access SLDS data to generate these reports for institutions in the North Dakota University System. Social security numbers must be provided for all students by program listed in the application for the previous two program years (July 1 – June 30) regardless of the funding source. Training providers that have not been on the ETP list for at least two years will be asked to provide student data for the time period available. The student data will be analyzed to determine effectiveness of programs and alignment with WIOA performance standards. Once the application is submitted and the state has determined that the required information is available, the state will approve, deny, or request further information on the program within 30 days of the receipt of a complete application. The state will notify the provider of the determination.

Registered apprenticeship programs are not subject to the eligibility criteria or application requirements. While registered apprenticeship programs are automatically eligible, not all registered apprenticeship sponsors may wish to be included on the list. Registered apprenticeship programs sponsors are contacted to determine whether they wish to be included on the list.

Continued Eligibility After the initial eligibility period of one full program year, training providers shall submit applications for continued program eligibility every two years. Applications for continued eligibility must be submitted by July 1st for the year in which eligibility expires. The SLDS will be used to generate performance information for institutions in the North Dakota University System. For training institutions not participating in SLDS, the following information must be submitted to Job Service. TrainND, Private training providers, and Tribal colleges must include the following: a) Names of all students enrolled in the program; b) Names of all students completing the program; c) Names of all students exiting the program; d) Information on recognized post-secondary credentials received by program students; e) Information on the program completion rate for such students; f) Social security numbers for all students by program listed on the application for the two previous years, regardless of funding source, which will be used to calculate the performance measures listed in Attachment 1. NOTE - SSNs will be used to generate the required annual WIOA wage and employment performance reports. Job Service ND will access SLDS data to generate these reports for institutions in the North Dakota University System. All training/education providers must include the following: g) Applications for continued eligibility must include verification documentation from the appropriate oversight agency to operate in North Dakota. h) Description of how the provider will ensure access to training services throughout the State, including rural areas and through the use of technology; i) Description of how the providers provide training services to individuals who are employed and/or individuals with barriers to employment; j) Information reported to State agencies on Federal and State training programs other than programs within WIOA title I-B; and E. Performance Requirements The performance information required is outlined in Attachment 1. Social security numbers must be provided for all students in programs included on the application in North Dakota for the previous two program years (July 1 – June 30) regardless of the funding source. The electronic system will provide a secure means to transmit the data file. Training providers that have not been on the ETP list for at least two years will be required to provide student data for the time period available. Social security numbers for all North Dakota students will continue to be required annually and will be used to calculate the performance measures. Student data must be provided in total within the specified time limit, usually within one month following the end of the program year to allow the time

necessary to process and submit federal reports and timely publishing of public aggregate reports. Performance information will be published online for each training program on the ETP list. Programs with less than 10 students enrolled will not be included in performance data for public display to protect individual student identity. F. Conditions for Removal The state may remove a program or programs from the list for failing to meet the established criteria or performance levels in this policy, or for not providing all required performance information for subsequent eligibility. Removal is also appropriate if the program has failed to attain or lost the accreditation required for professional licensure. A training provider that is removed from the list for the reasons stated above may re-apply for continued eligibility when they can demonstrate that they meet all the requirements. The state must remove from the eligibility list for a period of not less than 2 years any providers that willfully supply false performance information, misrepresent costs or services, or that substantially violate requirements of WIOA law or regulations. Providers are liable to repay all adult and dislocated worker funds received during the period of non-compliance. No training provider debarred by the Federal Government may be permitted to be placed or remain on the ETP list. In the case of a training provider or a program of training services that is removed from the list while WIOA participants are enrolled, the participants may complete the program unless the provider or program has lost state licensing, certification, or authorization to operate by the appropriate state oversight agency. G. Appeal Process Training providers can choose to appeal the rejection of their program for inclusion in the ETP list or its subsequent termination of eligibility. For any appeal by a training provider, an appeal must be submitted in writing via email within 14 days after notification of the decision. The appeal must include the justification for the appeal in their request. The training provider also has the right to request a hearing to discuss their appeal. An ETP list appeals board will be assembled. The appeals board will schedule a hearing if requested and make a decision within 60 days of appeal. This will be a final decision and the program will be unable to reapply through the ETP list eligibility process for one year from the date of final notification by the ETP list appeals board. Attachment 1 REQUIRED PERFORMANCE DATA North Dakota has established an overall performance level of 15% that may be adjusted as further guidance and more accurate data becomes available. Performance levels included in the measurement include employment rates and credential earned rates. This overall performance rate allows for the maximum inclusion of programs considering the characteristics of populations served and relevant economic conditions. Eligible training providers will receive one year to improve program performance before the program will be removed from the eligible training provider list. The following information is required for all applications for continued eligibility. Outcomes will be determined based on the student Social Security Numbers provided for each program. The SSNs will be matched to North Dakota wages and SWIS data to generate reports for each program with the following information: 1. The percentage of program students who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program 2. The percentage of program students who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program 3. The median earnings of program students who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program 4. The percentage of program students who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program

To include as many Registered Apprenticeship sponsors as possible, Job Service ND staff and the ND Office of Apprenticeship State Director sent a joint letter to all Registered Apprenticeship sponsors in ND. Several Registered Apprenticeship sponsors responded positively to the ETPL request. Personal contacts were made to every Registered Apprenticeship sponsor by Job Service ND staff and by the State Director to explain the process to verify information and

explain the exception to report performance information for Registered Apprenticeship sponsors. The sponsors who agreed to be included on the list were contacted by Job Service ND staff to verify information and explain the WIOA emphasis on Registered Apprenticeship and the benefits of inclusion on the ETPL. Some sponsors opted out of the ETPL and were provided guidance on the process should these sponsors decide to be included on the ETPL in the future. Currently, North Dakota has 54 Registered Apprentice sponsors included on the ETPL. On the RAPIDS report from November 2019, North Dakota had 104 sponsors with active, inactive and no apprentices. This represents 52% of the Registered Apprenticeship sponsors included on the North Dakota. The North Dakota ETPL site can be viewed at this URL <https://www.jobsnd.com/training/providers>

A biennial review of the state plan contains policies and procedures open to public comment from businesses and the general public.

4. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS, OTHER LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF WIOA SEC. 134(C)(3)(E), WHICH APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES FUNDED BY THE ADULT FORMULA PROGRAM

The North Dakota Workforce Development Council has established a policy due to limited funding to only serve individuals that meet the WIOA Adult priority.

POLICY 2-05-01 (0) POLICY An individual shall be eligible to participate in the WIOA Adult Program if he or she is: i) Age 18 or older; ii) Eligible to work in the United States including a citizen of the United States, a United States national, permanent resident alien, lawfully admitted refugee, parolee, or other individual authorized to work in the United States; iii) In compliance with Selective Service System registration (males only); and iv) Meets priority of service.

Priority of Service: The Workforce Development Council supports the WIOA priority of service while under limited funding for eligibility. These categories are:

- low income adults (WIOA Sec 3(36))
- adults who are receiving public assistance
- basic skills deficient (WIOA Sec 3(5))

The Workforce Development Council also encourages enrollment of North Dakota residents as a priority.

Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans - covered persons - will receive priority of service. 20 CFR Part 1010.110 adopts the term "covered person" to define those veterans and spouses of eligible veterans who are eligible for priority of service. The Jobs for Veterans Act does not change the requirement that individuals, to include veterans and military spouses, must first qualify as eligible under the WIOA Adult Program before participation.

North Dakota will exclusively enroll applicants that meet the WIOA Adult priority of service. Individuals who are not low income or are not receiving public assistance or are not determined to be basic skills deficient will not be enrolled into WIOA activities.

5. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S CRITERIA REGARDING LOCAL AREA TRANSFER OF FUNDS
BETWEEN THE ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

The North Dakota Workforce Development Council has established a policy to inform all one-stop career center staff of the transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I program.

POLICY 2-12-01 (0)

Job Service ND, as the fiscal agent and grant sub-recipient, with the Governor's approval, may transfer up to 50% of a program year's allocation between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

A transfer may occur at any point when unobligated Adult training funds in VOS reach a state-wide level of \$50,000 or less and is confirmed by JSND Finance.

This transfer must be approved by the JSND Executive Director.

C. WITH RESPECT TO YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED IN
SECTION 129 OF WIOA—

1. IDENTIFY THE STATE-DEVELOPED CRITERIA TO BE USED BY LOCAL BOARDS IN
AWARDING GRANTS OR CONTRACTS FOR YOUTH WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES AND
DESCRIBE HOW THE LOCAL BOARDS WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY OF THE
PROVIDERS TO MEET PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES BASED ON PRIMARY
INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR THE YOUTH PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION
116(B)(2)(A)(II) OF WIOA IN AWARDING SUCH GRANTS OR CONTRACTS.[11]

North Dakota is a single workforce area state. The WIOA Youth activities are provided by Job Service ND through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Workforce Development Council and Job Service ND.

State-developed and performance criteria is included in the Youth MOU. It can be viewed here: <https://www.jobsnd.com/workforce-development-council/governance>.

2. DESCRIBE THE STRATEGIES THE STATE WILL USE TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR
OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AS DESCRIBED IN 129(A)(1)(B), INCLUDING HOW IT WILL
LEVERAGE AND ALIGN THE CORE PROGRAMS, ANY COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER
PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THIS PLAN, REQUIRED AND OPTIONAL ONE-STOP PARTNER
PROGRAMS, AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE.

With the increase in age eligibility and focus to spend 75 percent of youth funds on out-of-school youth, recruitment efforts are targeted toward this population. Strategies to achieve improved outcomes include:

- Youth Coordinators leverage AJC Resource Room staff knowledge of youth seeking employment and services through utilization of the nine AJC resource rooms statewide;
- Core partners, WIOA Youth, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation communicate regularly for active referral and dual enrollment of out-of-school youth to ensure services are not duplicated and outcomes achieved;
- Adult Education ELL programs frequently work collaboratively with WIOA Youth Coordinators to provide services to New Americans;

- Front-line staff from the WIOA required partner agencies meet regularly to discuss dually enrolled participants and better align services provided;
- Youth Coordinators communicate with local networks including TANF and SNAP staff and/or community-based programs targeting homeless, disabled and transitioning youth and justice-involved youth through local at risk youth organizations and leverage resources.

Although the focus is serving the out-of-school population, service presentations including LMI, labor exchange education and youth program outreach continues to be provided to schools. Communication with school personnel including principals, vocational teachers and counselors is crucial to locate students who have dropped out or for those graduating and in need of assistance for occupational skills training to fill the jobs in-demand. These efforts have resulted in the Out-of-School Youth Expenditure Rate nearing 75% and the Work Based Learning requirement at 32%.

3. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL 14 PROGRAM ELEMENTS DESCRIBED IN WIOA SECTION 129(C)(2) ARE MADE AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED, INCLUDING QUALITY PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS UNDER THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ELEMENT. [12]

The WIOA Youth program incorporates all the requirements outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, specifically, objective assessments, employment planning (individual service strategies) and referral processes. All youth services are accessible through the Job Service AJCs and services are designed based on labor market information.

All youth, including youth with disabilities, entering the service delivery process receive an objective assessment. Assessment follows the guidelines in WIOA, section 129, including a review of academic and occupational skills, interests and supportive service needs.

Assessments provide the needed information and data to complete employment plans that link employment, educational and career pathway goals with the service strategies necessary to reach employment goals. Youth receive integrated services through the Job Service AJC. The assessment process identifies those with the interests necessary to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities, including non-traditional training opportunities. Youth program participants have all career services available as part of their employment strategies. Based on the assessment, youth are referred to appropriate services, including career counseling, specialized counseling, guidance and skill assessment.

Information is shared with other partners involved in the assessment to help unify and enhance the guidance and counseling process. Supportive services are provided to youth to assist them in completing their individualized employment plans. The service strategy is coordinated around the 14 Youth Program Elements, available to participants. The 14 youth program elements are:

1. Tutoring, study skills training and dropout prevention strategies: Participants may receive tutoring services and study skills training in order to complete secondary school. The North Dakota universities, community colleges, tribal colleges and other higher education partners will assist youth making the transition into postsecondary opportunities.

2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate: Providing alternative secondary school services is vital to re-engage youth who have not responded to traditional school settings. This service is provided through coordination with local school districts.

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences including summer employment and other opportunities are available throughout the year, and include pre-apprenticeship programs available through the Burdick Job Corps Center, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities. These opportunities not only help provide skills and experiences, but help youth understand what is associated with “real work” and what employers require of employees. Work-based learning opportunities, including summer employment opportunities, paid and unpaid work experience, internships, job shadowing and on-the-job training are directed at preparing youth for success in employment. Summer employment opportunities are directly linked to academic and occupational learning. In most rural areas in North Dakota, many youth are first introduced to jobs through summer employment opportunities. Activities for youth with significant barriers to employment continue to focus on pre-employment and work maturity skills. On-the-job training is an excellent tool for occupational skill building for out-of-school youth who are ready for skill development and employment. The individual plan of each youth is focused on the needs identified through the individualized assessment process. Job Service and apprenticeship partners collaborate to determine how to establish and expand out-of-school youth work experience opportunities to registered apprenticeships offered by employers. Additionally, youth have access to services provided at the Job Service AJCs, including assistance with work search, resume writing, interviewing, and career exploration. They also have access to jobsnd.com to connect them with unsubsidized employment opportunities.

4. Comprehensive guidance and counseling: Through the comprehensive assessment process, a Youth Coordinator may identify that guidance and counseling services would be of benefit to a youth as the individual proceeds through the program. If so, referral to various providers would occur. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling services may include, but are not limited to the following: 1.) Referral to drug and alcohol counseling services; 2.) Referral to mental health counseling services; 3.) Career counseling including information on career pathways and review of the RUReady.nd resource; 4.) Educational counseling; and 5.) Case management performed by a professional Social Worker or Vocational Rehabilitation counselor. Each of these services must be provided by an appropriately trained staff member, educational instructor, licensed counselor or social worker.

5. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training: Services are available for youth in need of such services to prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training. These services may include assistance with post-secondary financial aid documents, assistance to attend college tours, assistance with college entrance or program exams.

6. Occupational skills training: Occupational skills training is provided through Individual Training Accounts to out-of-school youth whose employment plan includes post-secondary school through short term skill training or a degree program through a community college or tribal college. Focus will be placed on preparing or retraining individuals for the in-demand occupations in the state. Priority consideration is given to training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with the in-demand sectors and occupations in the local area.

7. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities: Services are available for youth in need of education offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities.

8. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors: Youth are provided leadership development opportunities that may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, decision making and team work.

9. Adult mentoring: Mentoring opportunities with caring adults is sought to provide consistent guidance and support. Activities and projects that provide citizenship skills, life skills training, community involvement skills, and increase positive social skills, is used to develop overall leadership qualities.

10. Financial literacy education: Youth in need of financial literacy education services have access to activities designed to educate or assist youth with the following: making informed financial decisions including budgeting and accessing checking and savings accounts; learning to effectively manage spending, credit and debt; learning the significance of credit report and credit scores. Case managers have knowledge of financial literacy resources in their local area and make an effort to identify youth who need financial literacy assistance.

11. Entrepreneurial skills training: Resources are available for youth interested in developing their entrepreneurial skills. Resources include: • The UND Center for Innovation, a comprehensive, hands-on assistance is available to technology entrepreneurs, innovators and manufacturers interested in starting up new ventures, commercializing new products and licensing new technologies. • Entrepreneur Centers of North Dakota provide access to over 20 financing programs and a network of organizations who provide counseling, training and assistance to start-up and existing entrepreneurs. • Innovate ND is a comprehensive program of entrepreneur education and follow-up assistance with a goal to launch up to 20 new businesses in North Dakota annually. The program is open to all North Dakotans, former North Dakotans or other entrepreneurs, including students, who have an innovative idea, product or business service and want to grow their venture in North Dakota. • Marketplace for Entrepreneurs is a yearly event for where economic development organizations meet at Marketplace to provide training and technical assistance to North Dakota's entrepreneurs. A comprehensive directory for ideas, contacts, and other economic development information is found on the Marketplace web site.

12. Labor market information: Labor Market Information is provided to all youth receiving WIOA services. Information is mainly centered on career awareness, career pathways, career counseling or career exploration resources and occupational training available for targeted and in-demand industries and occupations. This information along with other services is available for youth as they transition and prepare for postsecondary education and training.

13. Support Services: Support services may be provided to WIOA youth participants when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in authorized WIOA activities. Support services include, but are not limited to the following: • Linkages to community services. • Assistance with transportation. • Assistance with housing. • Referrals to medical services. • Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work and safety-related attire, work-related tools, eyeglasses which include protective eye wear.

14. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation: All youth will be provided follow-up services for at least 12 months after participation ends. The

intensity and duration of follow-up services is based on individual need. Given the appropriate release of information, assessment information and employment strategies is shared with core and required partners to encourage consistent and accurate information that will foster a continuum of services. Information and referral processes will be implemented to introduce youth to the wide array of applicable services available through the workforce system.

4. PROVIDE THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE STATE POLICY FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTER OR COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(III)(VIII) AND FOR “REQUIRING ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO COMPLETE AN EDUCATION PROGRAM, OR TO SECURE AND HOLD EMPLOYMENT” CRITERION FOR IN-SCHOOL YOUTH SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(IV)(VII). IF THE STATE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY, DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL ENSURE THAT LOCAL AREAS WILL HAVE A POLICY FOR THESE CRITERIA.

IN-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY

POLICY 2-02-01 (0)

PURPOSE: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) includes the Youth eligibility category of “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”. Section 681.300 advises State Boards to define this criterion.

POLICY:

A low income individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment is defined as:

1. Having limited employment opportunities as defined as being unable to obtain employment after a four week employment search, or
2. Residing in a community with limited youth-related employment opportunities defined as a community with 60 or less worksites based on LMI Area Profile data on July 1st of each year, or
3. Having one or more parents incarcerated, or
4. Having a record of being unable to hold employment demonstrated by being terminated from two or more jobs in the past six months, or
5. Being identified as at risk of dropping out-of-school as documented by school professionals.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ELIGIBILITY

POLICY 2-03-01 (0)

PURPOSE: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) includes the Youth eligibility category of “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”. Section 681.300 advises State Boards to define this criterion.

POLICY:

A low income individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment is defined as:

1. Having limited employment opportunities as defined as being unable to obtain employment after a four week employment search, or
2. Residing in a community with limited youth—related employment opportunities defined as a community with 60 or less worksites based on LMI Area Profile data on July 1st of each year, or
3. Having one or more parents incarcerated, or
4. Having a record of being unable to hold employment demonstrated by being terminated from two or more jobs in the past six months

5. INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION, AS DEFINED IN LAW, FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL AND ATTENDING SCHOOL AS SPECIFIED IN WIOA SECTION 129(A)(1)(B)(I) AND SECTION 129(A)(1)(C)(I). IF STATE LAW DOES NOT DEFINE “NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL” OR “ATTENDING SCHOOL,” INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE AND PROVIDE THE STATE POLICY FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A YOUTH IS ATTENDING OR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

This is the North Dakota state's policy for school attendance. It doesn't specifically define not attending school but if the student isn't meeting the compulsory attendance requirements, the student would be not attending.

North Dakota Century Code CHAPTER 15.1-20 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

15.1-20-01. Compulsory attendance.

1. Any person having responsibility for a child between the ages of seven and sixteen years shall ensure that the child is in attendance at a public school for the duration of each school year.
2. If a person enrolls a child of age six in a public school, the person shall ensure that the child is in attendance at the public school for the duration of each school year. The person may withdraw a child of age six from the public school. However, once the child is withdrawn, the person may not reenroll the child until the following school year. This subsection does not apply if the reason for the withdrawal is the child's relocation to another school district.
3. This section does not apply if a child is exempted under the provisions of section

15.1-20-02. Compulsory attendance - Exceptions.

1. The provisions of section 15.1-20-01 do not apply if the person having responsibility for the child demonstrates to the satisfaction of the school board that: a. The child is in attendance for the same length of time at an approved nonpublic school; b. The child has completed high school; c. The child is necessary to the support of the child's family; d. A multidisciplinary team that includes the child's school district superintendent, the director of the child's special education unit, the child's classroom teacher, the child's physician, and the child's parent has determined that the child has a disability that renders attendance or participation in a regular or special education program inexpedient or impracticable; or e. The child is receiving home education.
2. A decision by the board of a school district under subsection 1 is appealable to the district court.

15.1-20-02.1. Attendance - Determination - Policies.

1. To be deemed in attendance for purposes of this chapter, a student may not be absent from school without excuse for more than: a. Three consecutive school days during either the first half or the second half of a school or school district's calendar; b. Six half days during either the first half or the second half of a school or school district's calendar; or c. Twenty-one class periods.
2. The board of each school district and governing body of each nonpublic school shall adopt a policy that: a. Defines an excused absence as any absence from school, if that absence is supported by either a verbal or written excuse supplied by the student's parent, teacher, or school administrator; and b. Articulates the type of documentation that may be requested to verify a student's absence.
3. This chapter does not preclude a school district or nonpublic school from withholding credit, removing a student from a course, or taking other punitive measures against a student who does not arrive in a timely fashion or who exceeds a specific number of absences, as determined by the school district or nonpublic school.

North Dakota's policy for out of school youth will be posted to [jobsnd.com](https://www.jobsnd.com/workforce-development-council/governance) shortly: <https://www.jobsnd.com/workforce-development-council/governance>

6. IF USING THE BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INCLUDE THE STATE DEFINITION WHICH MUST FURTHER DEFINE HOW TO DETERMINE IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS UNABLE TO COMPUTE OR SOLVE PROBLEMS, OR READ, WRITE, OR SPEAK ENGLISH, AT A LEVEL NECESSARY TO FUNCTION ON THE JOB, IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S FAMILY, OR IN SOCIETY. IF NOT USING THE PORTION OF THE DEFINITION CONTAINED IN WIOA SECTION 3(5)(B), INDICATE THAT IS THE CASE.

North Dakota provides the following guidance to the local area to determine basic skills deficiency: An individual who is Basic Skills Deficient is defined as: • Youth: Individual has English reading, writing or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test (Determined by TABE) or • Adult or Youth: The individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individuals' family, or in society (See documentation/justification requirements below).

For individuals who are new Americans and/or are English Language Learners, the case manager may use their discretion to determine if the individual can speak English at a level necessary to function on the job or in society. New American or ELL status alone does not constitute basic skill deficiency. If the English language skills of a new American (determined through conversation or ALC consultation) warrant a TABE, a test should be administered. A basic skills deficiency determination by a case manager, must include an assessment and a detailed summary of how the decision was made. The summary must be documented in case notes as justification of the decision.

D. SINGLE-AREA STATE REQUIREMENTS

1. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THAT REPRESENT DISAGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN. (WIOA SECTION 108(D)(3).)

2. THE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISBURSAL OF GRANT FUNDS, AS DETERMINED BY THE GOVERNOR, IF DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOR THE STATE. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(15).)

3. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF WIOA TITLE I YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND SUCCESSFUL MODELS, INCLUDING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. (WIOA SECTION 108(B)(9).)

North Dakota received no public comments that represent disagreement with the Plan. However, the state did receive comments from the Director of Career and Technical Education, Mr. Wayde Sick: The North Dakota Workforce Development Council creates an in-demand occupations list utilizing data and a weighting system. This will be used as a benchmark when approving local CTE programs. In addition to this, with the assistance of Job Service North Dakota, Labor Market Information and the State Longitudinal Data System, regional in-demand occupation data will be distributed to the eligible recipients and used by ND CTE to determine funding and program approval. Eligible recipients will also be required in the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) to consult with local employers, economic development, and chambers of commerce to identify local workforce and emerging needs.

The Governor identifies the State as the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds.

Job Service is the provider of WIOA title I Youth activities. Job Service provides all fourteen WIOA Youth elements and provides these activities statewide through the nine Job Service AJCs. Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Job Service North Dakota coordinate wrap-around services as needed for a successful outcome of educational and employment goals for youth and adult participants. Participants experience successful completions with on-the-job training and work experience often resulting in unsubsidized employment. Job Service has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the North Dakota Workforce Development Council.

4. A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ONE-STOP PARTNERS.

Consistent with federal law, partner agencies agree to make available to participants and employers through the One-Stop System the career and training services that are applicable to their programs. (These services and sources of funding for these services are described in Attachment I). The majority of the federal workforce development and training programs in North Dakota are administered through the One-Stop Career Center operator, either through designation by the Governor as the grant recipient or sub-recipient or through contracts. Many program services are delivered using a case management approach. Successful case management is a result of strong connections between staff and participant. Case management is defined as, "A client-centered approach in the delivery of services designed; 1.)prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services using, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and 2.)provide job and career counseling, including information on career pathways, during program participation and after job placement. Case managers will maintain a close, long-term relationship with participants. The balance of the mandatory One-Stop System partners have in place various arrangements with the One-Stop Career Center operator for serving clients which could include co-locating staff at the One-Stop Career Centers, having staff visit the One-Stop Career Center on an itinerant or appointment schedule or making formal and informal referrals to clients of services available at the One-Stop Career Center. Each of these arrangements is intended to maximize the resources

and services being made available to mutual clients. The applicable career services may be made available by the provision of appropriate technology at the comprehensive One-Stop Career Center, by co-locating personnel at the One-Stop Career Center, cross training of front-line staff within partner agencies, and the recent co-location of DVR in the Devils Lake and Grand Forks AJCs. Although co-location is desired wherever economically and practically feasible, through the use of technology and electronic linkages, an efficient customer service and referral system has been developed that supports customer choice and access to the programs and services of the One-Stop System partners. All partners will provide referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the One-Stop System. The primary principle of the referral process is to provide integrated and seamless delivery of services to workers, job seekers, and employers. In order to facilitate such a system, Partners agree to:

- Familiarize themselves with the basic eligibility and participation requirements, as well as with the available services and benefits offered, for each of the Partners' programs represented by the one-stop delivery system,
- Develop materials summarizing their program requirements and making them available for Partners and customers,
- Share assessment results of an appropriate interview, evaluation or vocational assessment,
- Provide substantive referrals to customers who are eligible for supplemental and complementary services and benefits under partner programs,
- Regularly evaluate ways to improve the referral process, including the use of customer satisfaction surveys,
- Commit to robust and ongoing communication required for an effective referral process, and
- Commit to actively follow up on the results of referrals and assuring that Partner resources are being leveraged at an optimal level.

The coordination of services established between partners in the One-Stop System varies depending upon the customer service needs being addressed. Each Partner commits to cross-training of staff, as appropriate, and to providing other professional learning opportunities that promote continuous quality improvement. Partners will further promote system integration to the maximum extent feasible through:

- Effective communication, information sharing, and collaboration with the one-stop operator,
- Joint planning, policy development, and system design processes,
- Commitment to the joint mission, vision, goals, strategies, and performance measures,
- Leveraging of resources, including other public agency and non-profit organization services,
- Participation in a continuous improvement process designed to boost outcomes and increase customer satisfaction, and
- Participation in regularly scheduled Partner meetings to exchange information in support of the above and encourage program and staff integration.

Data Sharing Partners agree that the use of high-quality, integrated data is essential to inform decisions made by policymakers, employers, and job seekers.

Additionally, it is vital to develop and maintain an integrated case management system, as appropriate, that informs customer service throughout customers' interaction with the integrated system and allows information collected from customers at intake to be captured once. Partners further agree that the collection, use, and disclosure of customers' personally identifiable information (PII) is subject to various requirements set forth in Federal and State privacy laws. All data, including customer PII, collected, used, and disclosed by Partners will be subject to the following:

- Customer PII will be properly secured in accordance with the Local WDB's policies and procedures regarding the safeguarding of PII.
- The collection, use, and disclosure of customer education records, and the PII contained therein, as defined under FERPA, shall comply with FERPA and applicable State privacy laws.
- All confidential data contained in UI wage records must be protected in accordance with the requirements set forth in 20 CFR part 603.
- All personal information contained in VR records must be protected in accordance with the requirements set forth in 34 CFR 361.38.

Customer data may be shared with other programs, for those programs' purposes, within the workforce system only after the

informed written consent of the individual has been obtained, where required. Customer data will be kept confidential, consistent with Federal and State privacy laws and regulations. All data exchange activity will be conducted in machine readable format, such as HTML or PDF, for example, and in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794 (d)). All one-stop center and Partner staff will be trained in the protection, use, and disclosure requirements governing PII and any other confidential data for all applicable programs, including FERPA-protected education records, confidential information in UI records, and personal information in VR records Confidentiality All Parties expressly agree to abide by all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and c regulations regarding confidential information, including PII from educational records, such as but not limited to 20 CFR Part 603, 45 CFR Section 205.50, 20 USC 1232g and 34 CFR part 99, and 34 CFR 361.38, as well as any applicable State and local laws and regulations. In addition, in carrying out their respective responsibilities, each Party shall respect and abide by the confidentiality policies and legal requirements of all of the other Parties. Each Party will ensure that the collection and use of any information, systems, or records that contain PII and other personal or confidential information will be limited to purposes that support the programs and activities described in this MOU and will comply with applicable law. Each Party will ensure that access to software systems and files under its control that contain PII or other personal or confidential information will be limited to authorized staff members who are assigned responsibilities in support of the services and activities described herein and will comply with applicable law. Each Party expressly agrees to take measures to ensure that no PII or other personal or confidential information is accessible by unauthorized individuals. To the extent that confidential, private, or otherwise protected information needs to be shared amongst the Parties for the Parties' performance of their obligations under this MOU, and to the extent that such sharing is permitted by applicable law, the appropriate data sharing agreements will be created and required confidentiality and ethical certifications will be signed by authorized individuals. With respect to confidential unemployment insurance information, any such data sharing must comply with all of the requirements in 20 CFR Part 603, including but not limited to requirements for an agreement consistent with 20 CFR 603.10, payments of costs, and permissible disclosures. With respect to the use and disclosure of FERPA-protected customer education records and the PII contained therein, any such data sharing agreement must comply with all of the requirements set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99. With respect to the use and disclosure of personal information contained in VR records, any such data sharing agreement must comply with all of the requirements set forth in 34 CFR 361.38.

Accessibility to the services provided by Job Service ND and all Partner agencies is essential to meeting the requirements and goals of North Dakota. Job seekers and businesses must be able to access all information relevant to them via visits to physical locations as well as in virtual spaces, regardless of gender, age, race, religion, national origin, disability, veteran's status, or on the basis of any other classification protected under state or federal law. • Physical accessibility - One-stop centers will maintain a culture of inclusiveness and the physical characteristics of the facility, both indoor and outdoor, will meet the latest standards of accessible design. Services will be available in a convenient, high traffic, and accessible location, taking into account reasonable distance from public transportation and adequate parking (including parking clearly marked for individuals with disabilities). Indoor space will be designed in an "equal and meaningful" manner providing access for individuals with disabilities. • Virtual accessibility — Job Service ND will ensure that job seekers and businesses have access to the same information online as they do in a physical facility. Information must be clearly marked and compliant with Section 508 of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services code. Partners will comply with the Plain Writing Act of 2010; the law that requires that federal agencies use "clear

Government communication that the public can understand and use" and all information kept virtually will be updated regularly to ensure dissemination of correct information. • Communication accessibility - Communications access, for purposes of this MOU, means that individuals with sensory disabilities can communicate (and be communicated with) on an equal footing with those who do not have such disabilities. All Partners agree that they will provide accommodations for individuals who have communication challenges, including but not limited to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, individuals with vision impairments, and individuals with speech-language impairments. • Programmatic accessibility - All Partners agree that they will not discriminate in their employment practices or services on the basis of gender, gender identity and/or expression, age, race, religion, national origin, disability, veteran's status, or on the basis of any other classification protected under state or federal law.

5. THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS USED TO AWARD THE SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR TITLE I ACTIVITIES.

The WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Career and Training Services are provided by Job Service North Dakota through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor, the Workforce Development Council and Job Service North Dakota.

Job Service is the provider of WIOA Title I Youth activities. Job Service provides all fourteen WIOA Youth elements and provides these activities statewide through the nine Job Service AJCs. Job Service has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the North Dakota Workforce Development Council.

6. HOW TRAINING SERVICES OUTLINED IN SECTION 134 WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS AND/OR THROUGH CONTRACTS, AND HOW SUCH TRAINING APPROACHES WILL BE COORDINATED. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL MEET INFORMED CUSTOMER CHOICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDLESS OF TRAINING APPROACH.

Classroom training services are provided through individual training accounts while On-the-Job (OJT) training is provided through a contract between the One Stop WIOA program provider and the employer. Career pathway information is provided by case managers during career exploration activities. Customer choice is supported by the provision of labor market information and through the occupations included on the North Dakota In-Demand Occupations list and Eligible Training Provider list (ETPL). Both are available on the Job Service website jobsnd.com. Consumer choice is enhanced through ETPL by comparison of program length and costs, listed credentials earned upon successful completion of programs, employment rates and median wages. On-the-job training occupations are not required to be on the In-Demand Occupation list or the ETPL. These training approaches may be coordinated through a Registered Apprenticeship arrangement or when the occupations of the OJT and Classroom training overlap. Sponsors for registered apprenticeship programs may take advantage of OJT and reimbursement for Related Training Instruction reimbursement.

7. HOW THE STATE BOARD, IN FULFILLING LOCAL BOARD FUNCTIONS, WILL COORDINATE TITLE I ACTIVITIES WITH THOSE ACTIVITIES UNDER TITLE II. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE BOARD WILL CARRY OUT THE REVIEW OF LOCAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED UNDER TITLE II CONSISTENT WITH WIOA SECS. 107(D)(11)(A) AND (B)(I) AND WIOA SEC. 232.

The upcoming (2019-2020 through 2022-2023) competitive grant process will begin mid-late December and is for a period of four program years. There will be a cut off for questions towards the end of January 2020 and the proposals will be due to the State by mid-late

February. Learning from the first competition that North Dakota conducted, edits were made to the process. The three separate competitions that were run with three separated RFP documents, are condensed into one RFP document. Demonstrated effectiveness was not used as eligibility requirement and was mixed with past effectiveness, this has been corrected and clearly stated in the new process. The RFP also specifically lists the approved activities that go along with Section 225 funding.

Similar to the previous competition, the new competition will be coordinated via a DPI fiscal officer and applications will be first screened for eligibility and then transferred to a review team consisting of members of the Governors Workforce Development Council. This committee will read and score the applications and share recommendations and review feedback with the State. Announcement of selected applicants will be in mid-March 2020 and funds ready for program year 2020 by July 1. Much of the process of the competition will mirror the first competition minus the changes listed above and also the removal of the bidder's conference.

8. COPIES OF EXECUTED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WHICH DEFINE HOW ALL LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDERS WILL CARRY OUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION OF AND ACCESS TO THE ENTIRE SET OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH ENTITIES ADMINISTERING REHABILITATION ACT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the One-Stop Delivery System for the State of North Dakota for the Period of July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2020 is the cooperative agreement which defines how all local service providers will carry out the requirements of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system.

<https://www.jobsnd.com/sites/www/files/documents/jsnd-documents/wdcmouonestopdeliverysystem.pdf>

E. WAIVER REQUESTS (OPTIONAL)

North Dakota requested and received a waiver of the obligation of eligible training providers (ETPs) to collect and report on the performance data on all students in a training program at WIOA Sections 116(d)(4)(A) and (B) and 122(d)(2)(A) and 20 CFR 677.230(a)(4) and (5) and 20 CFR 680.430(b)(5). North Dakota requests a continuation of this waiver that is approved through June 30, 2020.

There are no local or state regulatory barriers affected by this waiver request.

The extension of this waiver will lighten the burden for providers with many students of whom, only a small percentage are WIOA participants.

A continuation of the waiver of the obligation of eligible training providers (ETPs) to collect and report on the performance date on all students in a training program, aligns with policy priorities of encouraging providers to participate as an eligible training provider to increase training opportunities for consumers across the North Dakota. An increase of training providers allows consumers to choose training programs that are an appropriate match to their interests and may be available in their local areas increasing the likelihood of program completion and successful employment placement.

Individuals affected by the waiver are impacted due to increased program and training provider options allowing for more readily accessible training within local areas. Participants may be able to remain at or close to home while attending training, causing fewer additional hardships and stress of finances and time away from families.

As a result of the waiver, North Dakota has experienced an increase in the number of training providers and programs, several returning after initially declining due to the reporting requirements of WIOA. North Dakota performance reports are available to the public through Job Service North Dakota's website: <https://www.jobsnd.com/training/providers> Course Report cards are available for programs by clicking into the program, then clicking on the Course Report Card tab. Consumers may view data for programs where reporting includes more than 10 responses. The waiver and the affects of it are included in the WIOA annual report.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;	Yes
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;	Yes
3. The State established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;	Yes
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);	Yes
5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;	Yes
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;	Yes
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);	Yes
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;	Yes
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;	Yes
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.	Yes
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);	

ADULT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	76.5%	77.0%	76.5%	77.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$6,000	\$6,758.00	\$6,000	\$6,758.00
Credential Attainment Rate	67.0%	66.0%	67.0%	66.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	55.0%	57.4%	57.0%	57.4%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

DISLOCATED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	84.5%	84.1%	84.5%	84.1%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	85.7%	90.0%	85.7%	90.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$8,800	\$11,296.00	\$8,800	\$11,296.00
Credential Attainment Rate	66.5%	80.0%	68.0%	80.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	55.0%	80.0%	57.0%	80.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

YOUTH PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	77.5%	75.0%	77.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,800	\$5,150.00	\$5,800	\$5,150
Credential Attainment Rate	44.0%	55.0%	44.0%	55.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	55.0%	58.0%	57.0%	58.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

1

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR WAGNER-PEYSER PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

A. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL STAFF THE PROVISION OF LABOR EXCHANGE SERVICES UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, SUCH AS THROUGH STATE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO STATE MERIT STAFF EMPLOYEES, STAFF OF A SUBRECIPIENT, OR SOME COMBINATION THEREOF.

The state will continue to utilize state merit staff employees.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE STAFF TO ENSURE STAFF IS ABLE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO BOTH JOBSEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

Professional development is conducted in a variety of ways. The Job Service Labor Market Information Center presents an LMI workshop to Job Service AJC staff on an annual basis. This includes a review of LMI publications and resources available online. Biennial training is provided to Business Services and WIOA program specific staff. This type of training is held in an in-person format covering such topics as Registered Apprenticeship, hosting job fairs, business consultation, VOS updates, etc. Additionally biennial training is provided to WIOA and WP staff covering such topics as case management, resume building, interview skills, services provided to WIOA participants, support services, etc.

Job Service AJC staff receive annual training from UI staff on the UI Internet Claims Entry System (UI ICE) each fall of the year prior to the UI claims peak period. Job Service AJC staff receive information on pertinent workforce topics brought forward through Job Service and/or community partners such as Community Colleges, Society of Human Resource Management, Economic Development, Department of Commerce and Chamber of Commerce organizations, and industry specific employer boards.

Career and Technical Education invites employment service staff to a variety of workshops scheduled each year. Workshops include Improved Career Decision Making, Career Planning, RUReadyND Training, and other career educational topics. Labor Exchange system training is held to ensure staff working with job seekers and employers are always informed of any changes to the online services.

The annual Society for Human Resource Management Workforce Summit provides the opportunity to hear national speakers and network with business representatives and other workforce professionals. Additionally, the annual Governor's Main Street Summit provides staff a chance to learn about workforce development, rural area development, local economies, updates from the ND Department of Commerce, and hearing from national experts on various workforce subjects.

Finally, all Job Service staff are highly encouraged to take Leadership Everywhere for Everyone Foundation series courses and the Leadership Everywhere for Managers courses that are provided free of charge from the state's Human Resource Management Section. These classes are part of Governor Burgum's five cultural aspirations of "Work as One, Citizen Focused, Growth Mindset, Make a Difference, and Leadership Everywhere."

3. DESCRIBE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND AWARENESS ACROSS CORE PROGRAMS AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) PROGRAM AND THE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND WIOA STAFF ON IDENTIFICATION OF UI ELIGIBILITY ISSUES AND REFERRAL TO UI STAFF FOR ADJUDICATION

Job Service administers the UI, Wagner- Peyser and WIOA programs. During heavy peak seasonal increases in UI claims filing, UI and AJC managers and staff increase their cooperation to expedite the claims taking process. Job Service AJC staff receive annual training on UI ICE and other procedures. This ensures staff efficiently assist claimants with their UI claim filing. Job Service AJC staff connect with UI staff to resolve certain adjudication issues as identified in the established roles and responsibilities. In January of 2017, North Dakota began receiving Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) funds. The grant is providing services to all UI claimants who are not job attached and reside in the state. North Dakota had not applied for an RESEA grant for several years. UI staff provided training to new RESEA staff for understanding and awareness of UI issues of ineligibility and how to convey that information. In January of 2019, Job Service decided to not reapply for the RESEA grant due to a couple of reasons. North Dakota did not see a reduction in the average weekly duration and we felt the RESEA program put additional stress on rural unemployment claimants, who depending on their physical locations, had to drive 80-90 miles one-way to meet the mandatory in-person meeting obligation of the program.

In January of 2019, Job Service replaced RESEA with our state driven Reemployment Services Program (RESEP) that meets the needs of our claimants. All UI claimants who are not job attached and reside in the county where one of the nine AJCs are located, are required to participate in the RESEP program. However, the program is not as structured as RESEA, yet meets the individual needs of the claimant. One example of meeting their needs is not requiring an in-person meeting for the claimant if the meeting can be done over the phone, computer (SKYPE, video, etc.). Another difference in the program is there is no requirement of a second meeting. If the RESEP case manager and the claimant feel they are doing well in their job-search, have met all the requirements of the UI program, have a solid resume, comfortable in their interview skills, etc., the claimant is released from the RESEP program. Items discussed with the RESEP claimant are an orientation to Job Service, employment assessment, unemployment eligibility review, enrollment in Wagner Peyser, job search planning, Labor Market Information,

and WIOA. This program is being funded through the Wagner Peyser grant. North Dakota does recognize RESEA may become mandatory in future years.

B. EXPLAIN HOW THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND MEANINGFUL ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING ASSISTANCE IN FILING A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION THROUGH ONE-STOP CENTERS, AS REQUIRED BY WIOA AS A CAREER SERVICE

North Dakota Job Service AJC staff are knowledgeable in assisting individuals with UI claims filing. Job Service AJC staff have a long history of providing assistance to UI claimants. North Dakota has seasonal increase in UI activity. Job Service AJCs provide assistance following roles and responsibilities guidance provided by State UI management. In North Dakota, all UI claims are filed online. Job Service AJC staff are well prepared to provide meaningful UI claims filing assistance and manage large influxes of individuals during peak claims taking periods. Additionally, and as described in the previous paragraph, Job Service North Dakota replaced RESEA in January 2019 with our state driven Reemployment Services Program (RESEP) that truly meets the needs of our claimants.

Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to increase interview, soft or computer skills, short term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other core and community partner referrals. Career services including skill assessments, career guidance utilizing labor market information, job search assistance and access to WIOA assistance are available to all job seekers. Skill assessment completed by Job Service AJC staff enables clear direction to job openings or referrals to training programs. Knowing the skills job seekers have helps match them to skills desired in employer's job openings. When skill gaps are identified, job seeker training needs can be quickly addressed.

Staff provide assistance to claimants in navigating the UI ICE system in the Job Service AJC resource rooms on the available computers. Job Service AJC staff assist in setting up a State of North Dakota Login and ID, this includes creating an email address if needed. UI ICE Reference Guides and additional UI information are made available for claimants in resource rooms. UI claimants have a series of "How To" instructional videos to assist with the UI claims filing process and weekly certification. The videos are posted on the Job Service webpage jobsnd.com. The topics include: • Creating a State of ND Login • UI ICE Overview: How to File for Unemployment Insurance in North Dakota • Filing a Claim Online Using the UI ICE Website • I Filed My Claim, Now What Do I Do? • Filing A Weekly Certification Using the UI ICE Website • Helpful Tips for Job Attached Claimants.

C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

North Dakota UI claimants are required to have a resume on file with jobsnd.com. When a UI claimant files a claim online, information is interfaced to jobsnd.com and creates a partial registration. Jobsnd.com uses the partial registration data to automatically perform a job search and informs the UI claimant of suitable job openings available for application.

Employment Service staff assist with reemployment opportunities. In January of 2017, North Dakota began receiving Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) funds. North Dakota had not applied for an RESEA grant for several years.

However, and as described in the previous two paragraphs, Job Service North Dakota replaced RESEA in January 2019 with our state driven Reemployment Services Program (RESEP) that

truly meets the needs of our claimants. All UI claimants who are not job attached and reside in the county where one of the nine AJCs are located, are required to participate in the RESEP program. However, the program is not as structured as RESEA and meets the individual needs of the claimant. In the other 44 counties of the state where there is no AJC located, the non-job attached claimants still have to do four job searches each week and are required to have a resume filed in our system for area employers to use to meet their hiring needs. Additionally, we have tools on our website to assist claimants not living near an AJC that will assist them in finding meaningful employment. These tools are short instructional videos on how to build a resume, conduct an interview, and to file an unemployment claim. The AJC employees stand ready to assist any claimant with their employment needs. We use electronic means such as Skype and Zoom to conduct practice interviews or assist in any other means possible.

Job seekers, including UI claimants, visiting a Job Service AJC receive skill assessment, career counseling, and labor market information. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to increase interview, soft or computer skills, short term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other core and community partner referrals. Career services including skill assessments, career guidance utilizing labor market information, job search assistance and access to WIOA assistance are available to all job seekers. Skill assessment completed by Job Service AJC staff enables clear direction to job openings or referrals to training programs. Knowing the skills job seekers have helps match them to skills desired in employer's job openings. When skill gaps are identified, job seeker training needs can be quickly addressed. Job Service has invested in jobsnd.com to allow for self-service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from anywhere Internet access is available. Jobsnd.com links to the online labor exchange system for individual job search activity and employers to post job listings. Job seekers can use jobsnd.com to create quality resumes and conduct automated job searches. Additionally, job seekers can access education and training programs available and view labor market information such as in demand occupations, current wages and training required. Job seekers can also explore career options, find direction to veteran services, and access community resources.

D. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE W-P FUNDS TO SUPPORT UI CLAIMANTS, AND THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN W-P AND UI, AS APPROPRIATE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

UI claimants, visiting a Job Service AJC receive skill assessment, career counseling, and labor market information. Job Service AJC staff recommend on-site development tools to increase interview, soft or computer skills, short term industry training or degree programs through WIOA services and other core and community partner referrals. Job Service administers the UI, Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs. The Senior Management Team collaborate closely to support claim center and the Job Service AJC assistance to claimants needing to file their claims and register for work. Job Service AJC staff provide a variety of labor exchange services to UI claimants. The most common service is to assist a UI claimant with the requirement to register on the Job Service ND Virtual One-Stop (VOS). VOS is the electronic labor exchange system. Staff assist UI claimants with the online registration and provide assistance creating a resume. VOS has a virtual recruiter feature that will notify UI claimants of new job openings that meet their search criteria.

As stated in above paragraphs Job Service replaced RESEA with our state driven Reemployment Services Program (RESEP) that meets the needs of our claimants. All UI claimants who are not job attached and reside in the county where one of the nine AJCs are located, are required to

participate in the RESEP program. This program is being funded through the Wagner Peyser grant.

Additional services to UI claimants include techniques for improving interviewing skills, assistance with online/electronic applications, use of social media to broaden a UI claimant's job search. UI claimants receive referrals to WIOA Dislocated Worker for upgrade training for in-demand occupations. Out of area job search and relocation support services are provided as needed. Referrals are also provided to core programs for partner services such as increased academic skill and GED or vocational rehabilitation services that support their job search activities. Employers frequently utilize the Job Service AJCs for onsite hiring events and job fairs. UI claimants are provided information on upcoming hiring events and job fairs and are instructed on where to find future events on the Job Service ND website. Resources are available to UI claimants on various job seeking topics such as the importance of soft skills, quantifying and measuring occupational skills and accomplishments. For UI claimants with a criminal record, guidance is provided on how to overcome this barrier to employment on applications and during interviews. Federal bonds are available for business hiring UI claimants with a criminal record or other high-risk background.

North Dakota UI claimants are required to have a resume on file with jobsnd.com. When a UI claimant files a claim online, information is interfaced to jobsnd.com and creates a partial registration. Jobsnd.com uses the partial registration data to automatically perform a job search and informs the UI claimant of suitable job openings available for application.

Employment Service staff assist with reemployment opportunities.

North Dakota UI claimants complete their reemployment activities online on UI ICE. One feature of the UI ICE system is a provided list of five job openings that matches the UI claimants' last work occupation through an interface with the state job bank. A job list is provided each time a UI claimant logs into the UI ICE system to complete their reemployment activities. The reemployment activities include information on effective job search strategies, creating cover letters and resumes, an interviewing skills video and information on coping with job loss. Job Service AJC staff provide career services as outlined in WIOA to UI claimants and compliment the reemployment activities provided online.

To answer the question on eligibility assessment and assuming you are asking about UI, the RESEP case manager discusses the overall responsibilities with the UI claimant. If there seems to be an issue with the claim, the claimant is referred back to the Unemployment Insurance claim center and/or supervisors. All the Workforce Center managers can and do discuss issues with the UI Call Center supervisors if there is some type of adjudication issue that may be needed on an individual claim.

UI claimants receive skill assessments, career guidance utilizing labor market information, job search assistance and access to WIOA assistance. Skill assessment completed by Job Service AJC staff enables clear direction to job openings or referrals to training programs. Knowing the skills job seekers have helps match them to skills desired in employer's job openings. When skill gaps are identified, job seeker training needs can be quickly addressed. WIOA case managers will provide information to training and education programs via the ETPL which includes Registered Apprenticeship sponsors.

E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.

Based on the most current information available from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the numbers tell the story: North Dakota's 30,000 farmers and ranchers are among the very best in the world. They lead our nation in the production of many important commodities, including spring wheat, Durum wheat, all dry edible beans, pinto beans, navy beans, canola, flaxseed, all dry edible peas, and honey. Our state ranks second in black beans, great northern beans, lentils, oil sunflowers, non-oil sunflowers, all sunflowers, and all wheat; and third in barley, oats, and sugar beets. The demand for renewable energy has raised our state's ranking in soybean and corn production to ninth and eleventh, respectively. North Dakota had \$10.9 billion in combined crop and livestock production sales in 2019. Eighty percent (\$6.56 billion) of North Dakota's total agricultural sales are attributed to crop production. North Dakota listed \$10.9 billion in total agricultural sales. According to the United States Department Agriculture, North Dakota's 2018 crop acreage numbers ranked in the top ten states for many grain crops, two in black beans, lentils, sunflower, non-oil, and three in sugar beets, barley and oats. In 2017, North Dakota planted 6.68 million acres of wheat, 436,000 acres of sunflowers, 202,000 acres of sugar beets, 75,000 acres of potatoes, and produced 33,670,000 pounds of honey. Based on USDA data, North Dakota consistently ranks 15 in annual cattle and calf livestock inventory. Other than sugar beets and potatoes, North Dakota does not rank in processed vegetable, fruit, nut, or melon production among the 50 states and Puerto Rico. Crop and cattle production is spread evenly across North Dakota. However, sugar beets and potatoes are primarily grown in North Dakota's far eastern Red River Valley. Based on past and projected agricultural activity in North Dakota, we do not anticipate the above acreage or cattle inventories to change significantly in the next 4 years. Based on agricultural employer activity with Job Service ND for calendar year 2018, agricultural employers placed an average of 773 seasonal job orders per year requesting an average of 2,521 seasonal agricultural workers per year (1,748 H2A openings and 773 non-H2A openings on average per year). The top five labor-intensive crops in North Dakota include wheat, corn, soybeans, barley and sunflowers. In order of need, the majority of job orders recruit for farm equipment operators, beekeepers, animal ranch workers, general farm workers and truck drivers. As a major agriculture state, North Dakota places great emphasis on the provision or employment services for agricultural employers and migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFWs).

2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT

ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL
AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE

Based on the most current information available from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the numbers tell the story: North Dakota's 30,000 farmers and ranchers are among the very best in the world. They lead our nation in the production of many important commodities, including spring wheat, Durum wheat, all dry edible beans, pinto beans, navy beans, canola, flaxseed, all dry edible peas, and honey. Our state ranks second in black beans, great northern beans, lentils, oil sunflowers, non-oil sunflowers, all sunflowers, and all wheat; and third in barley, oats, and sugar beets. The demand for renewable energy has raised our state's ranking in soybean and corn production to ninth and eleventh, respectively. North Dakota had \$10.9 billion in combined crop and livestock production sales in 2019. Eighty percent (\$6.56 billion) of North Dakota's total agricultural sales are attributed to crop production. North Dakota listed \$10.9 billion in total agricultural sales. According to the United States Department Agriculture, North Dakota's 2018 crop acreage numbers ranked in the top ten states for many grain crops, two in black beans, lentils, sunflower, non-oil, and three in sugar beets, barley and oats. In 2017, North Dakota planted 6.68 million acres of wheat, 436,000 acres of sunflowers, 202,000 acres of sugar beets, 75,000 acres of potatoes, and produced 33,670,000 pounds of honey. Based on USDA data, North Dakota consistently ranks 15 in annual cattle and calf livestock inventory. Other than sugar beets and potatoes, North Dakota does not rank in processed vegetable, fruit, nut, or melon production among the 50 states and Puerto Rico. Crop and cattle production is spread evenly across North Dakota. However, sugar beets and potatoes are primarily grown in North Dakota's far eastern Red River Valley. Based on past and projected agricultural activity in North Dakota, we do not anticipate the above acreage or cattle inventories to change significantly in the next 4 years. Based on agricultural employer activity with Job Service ND for calendar year 2018, agricultural employers placed an average of 773 seasonal job orders per year requesting an average of 2,521 seasonal agricultural workers per year (1,748 H2A openings and 773 non-H2A openings on average per year). The top five labor-intensive crops in North Dakota include wheat, corn, soybeans, barley and sunflowers. In order of need, the majority of job orders recruit for farm equipment operators, beekeepers, animal ranch workers, general farm workers and truck drivers. As a major agriculture state, North Dakota places great emphasis on the provision of employment services for agricultural employers and migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFWs).

The high proportion of H2A openings reflects the shortage of agricultural labor in North Dakota due to the increased demand for workers in North Dakota's oil patch and the higher wages paid by the energy companies. Despite the diminished labor pool available for agricultural openings, Job Service ND remains dedicated to working with agricultural employers to locate qualified farm laborers and equipment operators to assist with the spring to fall farming season. Of the 1,748 H2A workers approved for employment in ND in 2018, it is important to understand that the number of them in the state at any given time fluctuates. Because of the ND short growing season, the number of H2A workers in ND in November through February is relatively small. In March, the numbers increase as farmers prepare to begin planting in April. In April through October, numbers reach their highest levels as crops are planted, sprayed, cultivated, harvested and transported to storage or market. When this process is completed, a significant number of H2A workers begin to return to their homes. This cycle repeats every year, giving a wide variance in numbers needed by North Dakota farmers at any given point in time. In addition, Job Service ND works to move MSFW's into permanent nonagricultural openings whenever possible. The North Dakota Farmer's Union states the EPA's recent announcement to grant ethanol production waivers to 31 oil refining companies is of

concern to family farmers. The waivers allow oil refiners to bypass the required levels of production under the Renewable Fuel Standard law. The law is intended to increase ethanol and biodiesel production from year to year. A significant uptick in the number of waivers has cut demand for biofuels by 2.6 billion gallons, according to National Farmers Union. Ethanol drives the demand for corn, and corn sales typically lead community price increases.

3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWs IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

The number of migrant farm workers traveling to North Dakota each year, primarily to work in the Red River Valley, continues to decrease. The decrease in migrant farm workers can be attributed to farmers' use of new equipment that improves spacing between row crops, the increased use of Roundup Ready sugar beets, and the use of modern farming practices has almost eliminated the need for manual workers in the sugar beet and potato fields. The transient nature of seasonal farm workers and their established working relationships with agricultural employers in North Dakota makes it difficult to develop accurate demographic data and consistent estimates of MSFW's in North Dakota.

H2A Foreign Labor Certification Agents reported the majority of the H2A workers are from the following countries: South Africa, Ukraine, Mexico, Honduras, Philippines, Bulgaria, Australia, Moldova, France, Ireland, England, Brazil, Peru, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Germany. The majority of H2A workers speak English, and those who do not speak English, speak Spanish. During calendar year 2018, agricultural employers requested an average of 2,521 seasonal agricultural workers (1,748 H2A workers and 773 non—H2A workers). However, Job Service North Dakota has received less than 84 new MSFW registrations per year over the last few years. Many of the positions go to returning workers not registered with Job Service North Dakota or to foreign workers under the H2A program. WIOA Section 167 grantee (Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET) reports Hispanic groups and families from southern states and North Dakota Hispanic families who have made North Dakota their permanent home make up the majority of non—H2A MSFW's workers.

4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

MSFW Outreach Workers primarily schedule meetings with migrants or receive walk-in customers in the Job Service North Dakota Workforce Centers. The Grand Forks Workforce Center serves the majority of North Dakota's MSFW population. Outreach efforts will be increased, especially in the Red River Valley. Outreach has been especially successful at MET (now co-located in several Workforce Centers), schools, day care providers, and public health clinics. These outreach efforts will continue and be expanded to other communities. The State of North Dakota will continue to make efforts to collaborate with Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services' Agricultural Worker Project (AWP) to provide better services to MSFW's. Partner agencies will be contacted to determine areas to conduct outreach and will continue to collaborate as available during community events and/or gatherings at churches, community centers, migrant health locations or migrant education locations.

MSFW Outreach Staff will focus outreach efforts to known establishments where MSFW's frequent. Outreach Staff will make efforts to have a presence at events where there is a chance even a small number of MSFW's will attend. Examples include, but are not limited to, childcare orientations, parent/teacher conferences, County Social Services offices/events, or community gatherings.

To support the Job Service North Dakota Workforce Centers MSFW Outreach Workers, the State Monitor Advocate provides the MSFW Outreach Workers with a variety of resources and assistance throughout the year: 1.) Quarterly, Wagner-Peyser registration reports are distributed to Workforce Centers for review to determine if newly registered MSFW's eligible for additional assistance; 2.) The State Monitor Advocate visits each Job Service North Dakota Workforce Center at least annually to meet with the MSFW Outreach Workers, discuss local trends, and to determine if MSFW Outreach Staff have necessary tools and resources; 3.) Workforce Center staff (including MSFW Staff) are provided training on the Complaint System; 4.) In an effort to meet equity indicators, the State Monitor Advocate reviews monthly and quarterly MSFW activity reports and based on these reports provides guidance as necessary to the Job Service North Dakota Workforce Centers; 5.) The State Monitor Advocate attends State Monitor Advocate National Training conferences. After each conference, the State Monitor Advocate advises the state's MSFW Outreach Workers on any regulation changes or new requirements; 6.) Any new directives or MSFW guidance disseminated by the National Office is promptly forwarded to the MSFW Outreach Workers. 7.) North Dakota has the MSFW complaint and the Farmworkers rights poster posted at each Workforce Center and translated into Spanish.

An ES complaint system is implemented and was followed by SMA training the complaint system contacts within each workforce center. The ES complaint system incorporates ETA forms and follows the law as described in 20 CFR 648 subpart E. The State Monitor Advocate intends to partner with Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services to provide training to refresh the knowledge of seasoned outreach workers and to fully inform new staff of farm worker legal rights and hopefully provide this information an annual basis.

MSFW Outreach Workers do not perform the MFSW program duties full-time. In addition to the MSFW Outreach Worker duties, the MSFW workers at Job Service North Dakota also provide Wagner-Peyser services and in some cases, WIOA case management services. Because MSFW Outreach Workers also perform Wagner-Peyser duties, the staff assigned as outreach workers are very knowledgeable in core programs and Unemployment Insurance.

Because North Dakota MSFW Outreach Workers also perform Wagner-Peyser duties, staff assigned as outreach workers receive training and professional development in the provision of high-quality services to job seekers and employers through in-person and IVN Wagner-Peyser training sessions. In addition, the State Monitor Advocate advises the state's MSFW Outreach Workers on regulation changes and/or new requirements. The State Monitor advocate will disseminate training materials to the outreach workers, including training on sexual harassment and human trafficking.

Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET), operator of the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in eastern North Dakota, and Job Service North Dakota maintain an on-going partnership to provide MSFW's additional opportunities for employment and training. MET maintains offices in the Red River Valley cities of Grafton, Fargo, and Wahpeton, North Dakota. Recently, two MET employees have co-located in JSND Wahpeton AJC. This collaboration continues to grow and to provide services to MSFW's in the respective areas. Tying the various service agencies together promotes a "one-stop" concept. MSFW Outreach

Workers from the Red River Valley offices attend networking meetings sponsored by farm worker advocacy groups. Agencies in attendance have included: 1.) Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET); 2.) Migrant Legal Services; 3.) County Social Service agencies; 4.) Migrant Health Services; 5.) Migrant and Seasonal Head Start agencies; 6.) Emergency food pantries; and 7.) Salvation Army organizations. At these networking meetings, participating members coordinate outreach efforts to provide the services they offer to MSFW's and their families and the efforts they make in locating MSFW's in order to promote their services. Outreach efforts include sharing of information through various sites where MSFW's may frequent such as local medical clinics and social service agencies. An MOU between JSND and MET was updated and recently signed on November 13, 2019. The MOU may be found on [jobsnd.com](https://www.jobsnd.com). <https://www.jobsnd.com/workforce-development-council/governance>

5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

North Dakota is not designated as a "Significant State" and does not have "Significant Bilingual" offices. However, all nine Job Service North Dakota AJC locations have designated Business Services Representatives, MSFW Outreach Workers, and Complaint Service Representatives. The Grand Forks AJC has a Spanish speaking staff member who assists with interpretation and all Workforce Centers have access to telephone interpreting services.

Job Service North Dakota AJCs, in coordination with other strategic partners, provide MSFW's and Limited English Proficient individuals with the full range of employment and training services including, but not limited to the following:

- Assistance with the Wagner-Peyser registration process in order to receive the full array of services;
- Resume assistance;
- Online job search assistance;
- Provision of information on services available in the Job Service North Dakota AJCs and contact information for partner agencies;
- Provision of basic information on labor rights, protections and responsibilities with respect to terms and conditions of employment;
- Assistance in reviewing job orders;
- Assessment and referral to agriculture and non-agricultural jobs, training, and support services;
- Provision of assessments, counseling, and other job development services;
- Assistance with submission of complaints to the State Monitor Advocate;
- Refer any apparent violations to Federal agencies;
- Referrals to local community service organizations;
- Assistance to Limited English Proficient individuals encountering language barriers;
- Assistance with career guidance and other job development contact strategies;
- Provide follow-up services as necessary and appropriate. Special emphasis is placed on the identification of MSFW customers.

Job Service North Dakota recognizes the importance of the agricultural industry to North Dakota and the large economic contribution made to the state's economy. Therefore, Job Service North Dakota AJCs ensure agricultural employers receive all the services provided to non-agricultural employers (see WIOA/WP Plan for services to employers). Job Service North Dakota AJCs provide agricultural employers the full range of employer services and some specialized services including, but not limited to the following:

- Assistance with the online employer registration process in order to access the full array of employer services provided by Job Service North Dakota;
- Assistance with the placement of job orders;
- Access to online labor market information;
- Access to online searches for qualified candidates registered with Job Service North Dakota;
- Assistance with assessing labor needs;
- Opportunities to participate in job/career fairs;
- Recruitment activities to find and refer qualified MSFW's and other domestic candidates to fill job order positions;
- Assistance with the H2A temporary labor certification program for agricultural employers experiencing a shortage of workers;
- Provision of housing inspections;
- Provision of information for compliance with labor laws and

regulations; • Assistance with information on employment and training programs, tax incentives (WOTC), and bonding services.

In addition, Job Service North Dakota staff identifies employers who employ MSFW's and promote the recruitment and hiring of domestic workers when they are available. When U.S. workers are not available, agricultural employers may utilize the H2A Labor Certification Program administered by Job Service North Dakota. The H2A program is a resource for agricultural employers to use when an employer anticipates sufficiently qualified workers will not be found in the local labor market. Job Service North Dakota's priority for all agricultural job orders is the recruitment and hiring of qualified and available U.S. workers.

As North Dakota is a major agricultural state, Job Service North Dakota Workforce Centers are dedicated to the provision, and continual improvement of services provided to MSFW's and employers.

Job Service North Dakota has nine AJCs across the state. Each has a Complaint System Representative and an MSFW Outreach Worker. The Complaint System Representatives assists MSFW's to file complaints (both JS and non-JS related), file apparent violations, coordinates with 167 grantees, other MSFW services providers, and forwards any apparent violations or complaints to the State Monitor Advocate. Marketing of the Employment Service Complaint System is the responsibility of the MSFW Outreach Workers by in-person meetings with MSFW's and Migrant Services Networking meetings sponsored by farm worker advocacy groups.

The purpose of the ARS is to meet the labor needs of agricultural employers, provide job opportunities to farm workers and protect the domestic agricultural workforce. The ARS ensures proper disclosure of the terms and conditions of employment to seasonal workers who are recruited from outside the local commuting area. Job Service North Dakota, Wagner-Peyser staff, and MSFW Outreach Workers will continue efforts to strengthen its working relationships with MSFW's and employers so each better understands how the Labor Exchange System and outreach services can be of assistance. Efforts will continue to include promoting the use of the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) to employers and the full range of Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange services delivered by Job Service North Dakota AJCs.

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

A. COLLABORATION

Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET) operates the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in eastern North Dakota. Partnership with MET has proven to be key to meeting MSFW needs and providing outreach. There is an updated Memorandum of Understanding in place with MET and continuation of this partnership is vital and of high priority. The MOU may be found on jobsnd.com <https://www.jobsnd.com/workforce-development-council/governance> Efforts will be made to strengthen relations with Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services' Agricultural Worker Project and other MSFW agencies. MET and JSND will collaborate training for outreach workers and coordinate services to MSFWs in the state. Outreach workers from MET and JSND meet quarterly to share information on promising practices to successfully reach and provide services to MSFWs.

B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The following MSFW related organizations and agencies, were given the opportunity to provide information and comment on the WIOA Unified Plan modifications within the Agricultural Outreach Plan:

Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET) 45 West 6th St. Grafton, ND 58237
(WIOA Section 167 Grantee)

Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET) 1350 32nd St S, Fargo, ND 58103 (WIOA Section 167 Grantee)

Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET) 715 St. N, Suite 108 D Moorhead, MN 56560
(WIOA Section 167 Grantee)

Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET) 108 7th Street South Wahpeton, ND 58075
(WIOA Section 167 Grantee)

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc. 102 N Broadway P.O. Box 607 Crookston, MN 56716

Community Health Service, Inc. 810 4th Ave. South. Suite 101 Moorhead, MN 56560 Southern
Minnesota Regional Legal Services 1015 7th Avenue North Moorhead, MN 56560

Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, 1000 Alliance Bank Center, 55 East 5th Street, St.
Paul, MN 55101

North Dakota did not receive any public comments or suggestions.

C. DATA ASSESSMENT

Upon review of the Wagner-Peyser data from the last four years, on average, equity ratios were met. It is challenging to meet these ratios quarter to quarter due to the low number of MSFW's accessing services at Job Service North Dakota Workforce Centers. Job service North Dakota and the State Monitor Advocate will continue to place special emphasis on the identification of MSFW customers. Outreach efforts will continue and be expanded in the future to ensure MSFW employment and training needs are met. This will be done by continuous monitoring of MSFW activity and providing guidance and training to Job Service North Dakota AJC Outreach Workers and other strategic partners.

D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Job Service North Dakota (JSND) provided equitable services to North Dakota's MSFW population. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed to solidify and maintain the partnership with Motivation, Education and Training Inc. (MET). Outreach efforts continue to be conducted throughout the State of North Dakota. North Dakota is a non-significant MSFW state and North Dakota's MSFW population primarily consists of H2A workers. New agriculture technology and farm practice changes continue to have a significant effect on the number of MSFW's in North Dakota. A continued decline is expected, but North Dakota will strive for continuous improvement in outreach efforts to MSFW's.

E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

The State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved this plan.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials: 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services; 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued; 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4) Approve corrective action plans; 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	Yes

WAGNER PEYSER PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	63.4%	68.8%	63.4%	68.8%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	63.0%	66.0%	63.0%	66.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5,600	\$7,129	\$5,600	\$7,129
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAMS

A. ALIGNING OF CONTENT STANDARDS

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) adopted the ESEA common core state standards for adult education in May 2015. Professional development to all adult education staff has been implemented over the past three years using the 2014 GED as a model. Additionally, the ND RLA, Science, Math and Social Studies standards are used in professional development alignment with the GED and subsequent adult education services; the areas of Math and Science are currently under review. NDDPI, along with educators and education staff from across the state, wrote the North Dakota Content Standards in Math, Reading/Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. This process started in 2017. Also, a part of ESSA, came the Choice Ready standards-with attention on ensuring the student is ready for multiple aspects of post high school choices. We currently do not use the same model as K-12 schools, but we strive to ensure our students are participating in activities that will also enable them to be Choice Ready (College and Career Ready). The College and Career Ready standards align with the State Adopted Standards. The assessments used in Adult Education in North Dakota are based/built off of the College and Career Readiness Standards(TABE/GED).

B. LOCAL ACTIVITIES

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES (SECTION 203 OF WIOA)

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) serves as the administrative/fiscal agent for Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). As administrative/fiscal agent, NDDPI ensures local service providers (adult learning centers) deliver services to eligible individuals who: 1. are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance (16 years of age); 2. do not have the basic literacy skills necessary to function effectively in society; 3. have not reached a level of education equivalent to that required for a certificate of graduation to be issued; 4. are unable to speak, read, or write English to obtain or retain employment commensurate with their ability. All activities funded under WIOA are authorized, approved and overseen by NDDPI. Adult basic education and English Language service are the responsibility of Regional (8) adult learning centers located across the state, plus the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR). Eligible organizations applied, per AEFLA, to NDDPI for federal funds through a competition process in December-February (2016/2017) and will again in December-February (2019/2020) to provide services. The NDDPI conducted a competition using a Request for Proposal (RFP) grant process under WIOA upon receiving guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. Criteria was aligned with the considerations required by federal legislation. The ND Governor’s Workforce Development Council, which serves as the state WIB, sought statewide funding distribution via a regional service delivery model. Grants were awarded on a conditional three year basis, with performance and funding standards identified for discontinuation by the NDDPI if/as warranted. In each subsequent year, all local providers will apply on an annual basis for continuing funding under Title II through an application process. A new competition is currently being implemented, starting in PY 20-21, and will be for a four year cycle. RFPs for all programs competed agreed to adhere to direct and equitable provisions to award funds under WIOA sections 225: corrections; 231: eligible providers; and 243: Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. The review of proposals included rating responses to the 13 considerations in

Title II of WIOA. The NDDPI used the following Page 147 process to distribute funds to awarded applicants: no less than 82.5 percent of grant funds were awarded as grants and contracts under Section 231 to carry out Section 225. Programs for Corrections, of which not more than 20 percent of such amount were available to carry out Section 225. Local grants were selected and funds distributed based on the ability to meet the requirements of AEFLA Purposes outlined in WIOA: 1. assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skill necessary for employment and economic self—sufficiency; 2. assist adults who are parents for family members become a full partner in the education development of their children; 3. promote transition from adult education to post—secondary education and training through career pathways; 4. assist immigrants and English language learners improve reading, writing, math, speaking and comprehension of the English language and acquire understanding of American government, individual freedom, and responsibilities of citizenship. This included providing adult education and literacy services to the negotiated performance levels (not less than the State) which demonstrated academia, college and career effectiveness, and focused on research—based methods of instruction. This included alignment with local workforce and other partnerships which created a collaborative seamless process and system for eligible students. The determination of priority services followed federal guidance. All activities must demonstrate sufficient intensity and duration. Under WIOA (Section 203), adult education and literacy activities are defined as, “programs, activities, and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education, and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training.” A wide variety of program strategies are used to be responsive to the needs of adult learners, with a strong foundational emphasis on quality, intensity and duration of services which will result in real learning and related life changes, over placing emphasis on serving large numbers of students. The plan scope, or the ‘how’ for adult education involved implementation of a developed comprehensive professional development plan for all local adult education providers, of the WIOA required features to meet its stakeholders’ requirements, and best practice strategies for both instructional and social readiness for college and career. Partnerships with employers are emphasized during professional development and examples of existing relationships between adult learning centers and employers are shared and discussed. North Dakota has a couple very strong relationships that assist in getting employees a GED in order to advance inside the company/business. A (historical) formula method was used based upon region population, unemployment rates and other distinguished factors (past performance of core indicators, EFL gains).

C. CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS

The NDDPI currently allocates federal and state funds to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) to provide adult education and literacy services at five state correctional facilities: State Penitentiary, Missouri River Correctional Center, James River Correctional Center, Thompkins Rehabilitation Correctional Center and the Youth Correctional Center. DOCR also provides a variety of resources (technology, curriculum, professional development, and leadership/guidance) to the Dakota Women’s Correctional and Rehabilitation Center. Current DOCR educational staff teach a comprehensive program which includes special education services, secondary high school diploma or GED, career pathways, peer tutoring re—entry transition, career readiness, Microsoft digital literacy and other technology courses, Read Right (for low literacy students), college level/credit courses via IVAN or correspondence, and more offerings that are Center dependent. Funds were granted to support education programs for the correctional facilities in these areas: Adult education and literacy services; special education as determined by the eligible agency, secondary school credit, integrated education and training,

career pathways, concurrent enrollment, peer tutoring, and, transition to re—entry initiatives/post—release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Each of the Centers that are granted funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution have assured to prioritize serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program. All incarcerated individuals in North Dakota are mandated by law to work towards their High School Diploma or GED if they do not have one. The education program inside the ND DOCR has been recognized as being a key piece of programming in reducing recidivism. Page 149 Available for both adults and juveniles is the research/evidence based Read Right program and also industry specific programs (i.e., welding, construction, FACS, Agriculture, Technology education, Commercial Arts, Vehicle Maintenance and Repair, computer drafting/3D printing). Inmate tutoring is offered as paid employment following completion of a training program. Classes in career readiness and reentry planning are available and required by inmates within a year of parole/release. Corrections, although under one state agency, participated in the competition requirements and were scored according to criteria listed above. Funding was not be provided for county or city jail inmates as the transition of services as most inmates do not stay beyond a 60 day incarceration time frame; previous data has shown minimal measurable skill gain in that environment and thus, the decision was made that it was not financially appropriate to serve at the county or city jails at this time. Our Regional centers may provide resources to the county and local jail if they see it could benefit students in their Region.

D. INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs will engage students in purposeful use of the language. All of adult learning centers in North Dakota offer a civics course that eventually ends with the student needing to pass a civics test in order to be finished. Also, all of the adult learning centers offer EL instruction and assessment. However, the civics course and test provide are not as robust as we would expect from the IELCE program. North Dakota offers, through the competition process, the federal funding it is granted to one Regional center. Fargo Adult Learning Center was awarded the IELCE funds during the last competition. They were the only applicants and also serve over sixty percent of the states EL adult education population. Their IELCE program included EL instruction and a citizenship and civics course that was robust enough to meet the standards of an IELCE program. The program also included, concurrently and contextually, and IET program that included workforce preparation activities as well as workforce training. One of the pathways included a strong partnership with a healthcare provider and included CNA training. The healthcare provider was apart of the training and their standards were a part of the curriculum. This led to instant employment for those who completed. The plan moving forward is to find resources and partnerships to be able to offer similar programs, as mentioned above, in more Regional centers across the state. The next two sites have already been involved in some training and PD and are actively seeking out a way to start an IELCE program. At the State level, we hope to be able to secure more funding legislatively with the evidence from the Fargo Adult Learning Center. This will Page 150 accelerate the growth of IELCE possibilities in the state. DPI will require all eligible providers (sections 225, 231, and/or 243) to apply via the standard application process to ensures all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The agency ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. DPI believes these approaches meet the AELFA requirements to ensure direct and equitable access. The agency uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by

incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. The agency attaches a point based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applicants must provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration.

North Dakota will award Section 243 funds to an eligible provider through the competitive application process outlined above. Funds will be used to support the operational expenses of the local IELCE program, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other items necessary to carry out instruction in English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, and civics education. While the State plans to issue guidance and technical assistance to eligible providers on how to co-enroll participants in occupational training, as appropriate, some section 243 funds may be used to offset occupational training costs as part of an integrated education and training program. It is a goal of the ND Adult Education program to strategically find partnerships and funding opportunities to advance the IELCE program.

The IELCE program that current exists and any that develop in the future will include a career pathway that involves a career listed on the in-demand job list that is created on an annual basis. By incorporating cultural aspects into the curriculum that already includes workplace preparation and workforce training, a program can readily prepare an individual for a career that leads to economic self-sufficiency. The very nature of the program accomplishes what this section is asking, as long as it is ran effectively. Strong partnerships with employers and trainers enable a well ran program. Ensuring the adult education portion of the program is aligned with ND content standards and that the IET portion is part of a career pathway will benefit our students in the area of gaining or advancing in employment.

The Regional adult learning center is directly responsible for attaining a knowledge of the local workforce landscape and developing the relationships necessary for a successful IELCE program. Also, the Workforce Development Council creates great resources that can be accessed and is a direct to the development system. Lastly, working and collaborating with state and local workforce partners will help to integrate the workforce development system and its functions into the IELCE programs.

E. STATE LEADERSHIP

1. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT THE REQUIRED STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA

The most critical element of continued leadership activities focused on increasing student learning and monitoring/evaluation of local programs. All local programs are on a two year cycle for onsite monitoring. NDDPI is on the Governor's Workforce Development Council. This position promotes the collaboration and vision of workforce partners to ensure a seamless system is developed, implemented and evaluated for effectiveness. The development of Career Pathways and IELCE/IET programs is a key initiative. North Dakota DPI used funds available under section 222(a)(2) to enhance the quality of programming in the adult education system. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds made available were used to carry out State Leadership activities under section 223. Activities supported with federal leadership funds and extended using State funding include: • WIOA core partner programs aligned and coordinated services for program participants. Leadership funds were used to build the capacity of grantees to coordinate and align services by cross-training staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and referral between partners, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships. In addition, the development of all components of career pathways is a priority with a focus on bridge programming and integrated education and training. •

Supporting statewide PD and identifying annual PD needs, determine delivery and evaluate results to ensure best practice approaches which result in collaborative partnerships, academic and career focused rigors, increases in student MSGs and teacher/program quality. These funds were used on topics to include content standards implementation, instructional strategies and methodologies, integrated education and training, bridge programming, transition to post-secondary education, use of technology, distance education, and services to students with disabilities, and technical training with databases and assessment applications. Technical assistance is a strong component of leadership activities and funds as the State Office continues to support local programs with research/evidence based programs, activities and curriculum's to meet the individual needs of students. Technical assistance focused on Page 152 data and the student data management system (LACES), assessment and instruction; additionally, the aforementioned areas of career readiness, integrated employment and training and career pathways, and core partner services were key for local programs. The 2019-2020 PD calendar is being developed with these focused topics in mind. Using technology to improve program effectiveness through training and technical assistance focused on preparing instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance instruction, programming, and distance education. The State contracted to provide PD in the area of technology through activities such as face-to-face and online training in a variety of areas, and included educational technology, digital literacy instruction, and distance learning. In addition, other training and technical assistance focused on effective use of the statewide data system to maintain accurate student data and continuously improve programming. The State Office supported multiple methods to ensure promising practices and models are shared with all providers to include local program TA and monitoring visits, monthly conference calls, electronically shared association newsletters monthly about training opportunities, high-quality resources, and promising practices for instruction and programming; an annual conference and other PD activities. The State provided grantee oversight to include monthly data monitoring, annual site visits, and a program improvement monitoring process for low-performing grantees.

instruction and teacher training. • The State also evaluated integrating literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers through providing funding for basic skills and HSE preparation and partnering with local workforce programs. To identify curriculum frameworks and align rigorous content standards that specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition. • Primary indicators of performance described in section 116; • Where appropriate, content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State. The State accomplished this WIOA provision by restructuring English Language Acquisition Content Standards to include integration of language acquisition and with workforce preparedness training. Further, professional development on integration of the College and Career Readiness Standards for adults with instruction for all students was utilized. Through participation of the State inter-agency planning initiatives with the WIOA partners, the State's adult education providers collaborated where possible and avoid duplicating efforts in order to maximize the impact of the activities described above.

2. DESCRIBE HOW THE STATE WILL USE THE FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PERMISSIBLE STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 223 OF WIOA, IF APPLICABLE

The provision of high quality professional development has been strong across North Dakota and expanded to career pathways, bridge programs and effective career planning to meet the state's continual employment needs. IET and digital literacy are being advanced and designed for work with ELL students as our priority. As always, technical assistance was a strong component of leadership activities and funds, as the State Office continued to support local

programs with research/evidence based programs, activities and curriculum's to meet the individual needs of students. Technical assistance continued to focus on data Page 153 and our associated student data management system (LACES), assessment and instruction; additionally, the aforementioned areas of career readiness, integrated employment and training and career pathways were key for local programs.

F. ASSESSING QUALITY

The adult learning centers are responsible to the State Office for meeting standards of quality for administration and instruction. Effectiveness of programs, services and activities of local recipients of funds are assessed through systematic evaluation of programs. All activity related to ABE/ESL students are entered at least weekly into the student data management system. The State Office conducts random, but at least monthly, audits on program data for multiple indicators of quality. Secondly, the state used both data match and personal contact to identify performance indicators. Each local program is expected to meet the state negotiated performance measures. Lastly, as mentioned above, accountability lies in the results on onsite monitoring by the State Office as well as local program monitoring to assess their own standards and performance. The State Adult Education program evaluates programs monthly through a monthly desk audit process in which measures such as average attendance hours, educational functioning level gains, number of students post-tested, etc., are reviewed using the student data management system. The desk audits allow programs to review operational aspects of the program such as the percentage of funds expended, completion of required professional development, and completed personnel activity reports. In addition, the State Office performs site monitoring visits for each adult education and literacy program to ensure that state and federal laws and policies are followed, reviewed program performance, and connected with sponsoring administrators. After monitoring, the local program are required to submit a corrective action plan to address any report findings, recommendations, and commendations within an agreed upon timeline and follow up to the satisfaction of the State Office. An online repository and directory was created for statewide staff to have instant access to instructional and best practice resources and contact information/instant messaging to other centers. This allowed local program activities to increase their access to practices that are working and to share out best practices. All related PD activities included an evaluation component to provide the state office with demographic data of participants, and to determine how the PD activity is being utilized in the classroom and what related success occurred as a result. Secondly, evaluations helped the state office determine the quality of training, relevance and applicability of the topic. Respectively, each adult learning center director is responsible to ensure that the PD activity or event is implemented into the classroom or instructor methods and that by classroom observations, student educational gains, or teacher interview, the effectiveness of the PD is tracked. The State ensured student performance improvement, financial accountability, program quality, and regulatory compliance of local providers in accordance with federal laws and regulations, State statutes and rules, and the provisions of an approved grant award. The monitoring component of the Quality Assurance System is a risk assessment process used to Page 154 evaluate variables associated with workforce education grants and assign a rating for the level of risk to the federal Department of Education and the agency. In order to complete risk assessments, certain risk factors have been identified which may affect the level of risk for each agency. A risk matrix is completed for each provider. The annual risk assessment is conducted to determine the monitoring strategy appropriate for each provider. In addition to program improvement plans and other actions taken to improve quality, the following activities are available: • New Director Training and Mentoring. Provided new directors with information such as federal and State guidelines, data collection and National Reporting System (NRS) reporting, and resources needed to administer their

programs. • Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Training. Through ongoing training, a network of trained professionals ensure the uniform administration and reporting of assessments used for determining federal-level gains. • Data Reporting and Program Improvement Training. Provided training on the fundamentals of the NRS. Topics include monitoring, data analysis and collection, types of data and measures, assessments, data quality, and related information. • Technical Assistance. Adult education monthly calls inform adult educators of program changes and reporting announcements, and provide opportunities to ask questions of State staff. In addition, technical assistance papers are posted on the federal Department of Education website. • Teacher Training. Provided information and resources to support instruction in the areas of HSE preparation, college and career readiness, career awareness and planning, career pathways, reading, and math instructional strategies.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and	Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;	Yes

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);	Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;	Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;	Yes
4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to	Yes

The State Plan must include	Include
serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.	
5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).	Yes

SECTION 427 OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA)

At the State level, the NDDPI requires all grantees of either state or federal funds, sign an assurance that they have read the GEPA requirements, understand the requirement parameters and agree to oblige to the highest standard possible, to carry out the intent of GEPA. [Currently, the NDDPI is not competing funds for State Leadership]. The NDDPI State Office has on file a statement from every funded program that they ensure equitable access to and participation in, federal assisted programs for students, teachers and other program beneficiaries with special needs. The NDDPI monitoring process of the local adult education programs, includes several questions about GEPA to justify compliance with Section 427.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	57.0%	57.0%	58.0%	58.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	54.0%	54.0%	55.0%	55.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$5100.00	\$5,149.00	\$5150.00	\$5150.00
Credential Attainment Rate	62.0%	62.0%	63.0%	63.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	49.0%	49.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

**PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
(COMBINED OR GENERAL)**

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) continues to regularly seek the advice of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) on a number of issues including the state plan contents, consumer satisfaction, program goals and evaluation, policies, order of selection, public education and building relationships with the business community.

The results of the client satisfaction survey for FFY 2019 showed 87% overall satisfaction with vocational rehabilitation services. The SRC's Planning and Evaluation Committee receives quarterly reports on the client satisfaction rates. They review the information, which is then discussed at the quarterly SRC meetings. They have not identified any trends or anomalies. The SRC made no policy recommendations during this fiscal year, nor did their annual report include any specific recommendations based on the survey results.

As had been identified in the Strategic Plan, VR has been reviewing and making changes to agency policies. All revisions have been reviewed with and approved by the SRC.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

One recommendation was made by the SRC throughout the year.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

VR should maintain the Order of Selection structure within the state plan.

Response:

VR concurs and will continue to do so. *Attachment (m) addresses this recommendation.*

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

NDVR has not rejected any of the Council's input or recommendations.

B. REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

1. A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY WILL PROVIDE THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WAIVER REQUEST;

ND does not request a Waiver of Statewideness.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL APPROVE EACH PROPOSED SERVICE BEFORE IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT; AND

NA

3. REQUIREMENTS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN WILL APPLY TO THE SERVICES APPROVED UNDER THE WAIVER.

NA

C. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH AGENCIES NOT CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES UNDER THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work with multiple agencies and entities throughout the state. A number of these are related to cooperative ventures with the

Department of Human Services that facilitate employment of persons with significant disabilities. Listed below are the primary businesses, agencies and groups with whom we are currently working. The only groups in this attachment, with whom we have a formal written agreement, are the North Dakota Department of Agriculture and Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

(1) Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation Program – Cooperative agreement with VA/VR is to ‘ensure seamless, coordinated, and effective VR services to North Dakota’s veterans with disabilities and their dependents with disabilities; to improve cooperation and collaboration between the two agencies; to avoid duplication of services; to improve interagency communication; and to establish staff cross-training opportunities.’

While we do not have formal written agreements with the following entities; state and regional DVR staff work cooperatively with them based on individual consumer needs.

Business Information Centers (BIC) – Located in Bismarck and Grand Forks, the BICs provide consultation and resources for DVR consumers on various aspects of establishing and maintaining a business.

Small Business Administration (SBA) – Ongoing coordination of shared training and education programs between SBA staff and DVR staff.

Department of Commerce and local economic development groups – Offers resources for funding and business development for DVR consumers.

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) – Provides mentoring and consultation to DVR consumers who are developing business plans.

Lewis and Clark Development Corporation – Processes revolving loan fund applications for DVR consumers pursuing self-employment.

ND State Council on Developmental Disabilities (NDSCDD) – The council advocates for policy changes that promote choice, independence, productivity, and inclusion for all North Dakotans with developmental disabilities (DD). The council supports and provides funding for projects and activities that maximize opportunities for consumers and families. The NDSCDD serves in a planning and advisory capacity to state policymakers and agencies relative to services for persons with developmental disabilities. Areas of emphasis include individual employment opportunities, integration and inclusion, and empowerment and promotion.

North Dakota Association for the Disabled (NDAD) – Occasionally provides monies to DVR consumers for non-employment related expenses.

North Dakota Chamber of Commerce – Cooperative training and information exchange. Regional DVR staff are also members of their local chambers and participate on various chamber committees. This enables DVR to develop relationships with the business community.

Rocky Mountain ADA Center – Provides technical assistance, resources, education and training on disability issues including the ADA.

Center of Technology and Business – Provides technical assistance to DVR consumers in developing business and marketing plans.

North Dakota Center for People with Disabilities (NDCPD) – A statewide organization that serves the disability community and works with community providers and state and local

government agencies to provide training, technical assistance, service, research and information dissemination. NDCPD faculty and staff have extensive experience in topics such as transition, person-centered planning, self-determination, employment, aging and health and they have cultivated numerous state and national collaborations over the years. Minot State University (MSU) serves as NDCPD's host institution.

2. STATE PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998;

ND Assistive – Assistive is North Dakota's Tech Act program. Assistive serves as North Dakota's federally-funded assistive technology project through a sub-contract with the North Dakota's Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Assistive offers services to North Dakotans with disabilities to help them bridge the gap between ability and disability using assistive technology (AT). Assistive is a statewide program designed to increase access to, and acquisition of, assistive technology. The DVR Director or designee is a voting member on their advisory council and participates in a collaborative partnership with Assistive.

3. PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE;

North Dakota VR works cooperatively with rural business development programs, and other programs to deliver specialized programs and services to assist in enhancing the workforce of North Dakota. The strength of North Dakota's economy is the farmers and ranchers who lead the nation in the production of crops. This high level of production creates economic development and opportunities for expanded employment in rural communities across North Dakota. The Division assigns staff working in rural communities as liaisons to the USDA activities that serve to benefit individuals with disabilities. The Division also maintains a permanent seat on the North Dakota Workforce Development Council. North Dakota VR's role is to advocate and provide technical assistance that enhances opportunities for employment in rural North Dakota.

North Dakota DVR has an agreement with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture to determine the financial viability of farmers and ranchers with disabilities applying for and receiving VR services. Both agencies collaborate to support the farmer and rancher to determine the financial viability of their agricultural business. With a determination that the farm or ranch business is financially viable, DVR provides disability related solutions to the farmer or rancher's continued employment while the staff from Mediation Service assists with any continued credit and financial matters.

4. NON-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES SERVING OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

For eligible youth, DVR collaborates with the following agencies to provide comprehensive services to assist the youth with achieving competitive integrated employment:

- Police Youth Bureau – Is intended to divert youth from the juvenile justice system, prevent delinquency and intervene in crisis situations.
- Division of Juvenile Services – The administrative agency directed to take custody of delinquent and at-risk youth.
- ND Youth Correctional Center – The state youth correctional center that provides therapeutic treatment to juvenile offenders.

- Behavioral Health Division – Provides leadership for the planning, development, and oversight of a system of care for children, adults, and families with severe emotional disorders, mental illness, and/or substance abuse issues.
- Independent Living Centers – Eliminate barriers and assist individuals with disabilities so they can live and work more independently in their homes and communities.
- Social Services – Provide food stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, children's health services, childcare assistance, home and community-based services and supports disabled individuals, personal care assistance, child welfare (foster care, child protection services, and related services), and referrals to other local resources and programs.
- Children's Special Health Services – Provides services to children with special health care needs and their families and promote family-centered, community-based, coordinated services and systems of health care.
- ND Vision Services/School for the Blind (NDVS/SB) – Offers services to ND residents who are blind or have a visual impairment.
- ND School for the Deaf/Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing – Offers services to ND residents who are deaf or have a hearing impairment.
- Pathfinder – Statewide, federally-funded (Office of Special Education Programs) parent training and information center. The purpose is to support parents and assist students with increasing independent living, self-determination and self-advocacy skills.
- Family Voices – Is a national, nonprofit, family-led organization which aims to achieve family-centered care for all children and youth through age 26 with special health care needs and/or disabilities.
- ND State Council on Developmental Disabilities – One of the council's goals is to support community-based competitive, integrated employment for people with developmental disabilities.
- Anne Carlsen Center – Offers community-based care for those of all ages with autism and a wide variety of other intellectual and developmental disabilities through assistance learning social skills and vocational skills training.
- Federation of Families – Provide leadership in the field of children's mental health; address the unique needs of children and youth, to ensure rights, support access to community-based services and to provide information and engage in advocacy.
- ND Brain Injury Network – The ND Brain Injury Network helps people with brain injury, their families, and providers find answers to questions, receive ongoing support, and gain access to services.
- ND Brain Injury Advisory Council – The mission of the ND Brain Injury Council is to improve the quality of life for all individuals with brain injury and their families through brain injury identification, awareness, prevention, research, education, collaboration, support services, and advocacy.
- ASPIRE – The North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation offices are participating in a regional consortium with five other states in a grant initiative called the Promise Grant. Utah Vocational Rehabilitation has taken the lead role in this consortium with the other

states, South Dakota, Montana, Colorado, South Dakota and Arizona. The Aspire project is a five year initiative which is conducting a study of 100 youth with disabilities in North Dakota receiving Social Security Insurance between the ages of 13 and 16. Services include pre-employment transition and transition services.

- DHS Children and Family Services Chafee Foster Care Transition Program – Services and supports are available through the Chafee Program for foster youth, age 16+, who have been identified as "likely to age out of foster care", and for youth who have aged out of the system and have not yet reached their 23rd birthday.
- Youth Works – A private, nonprofit agency whose focus is in working teens, parents and young adults. They have programs for runaway, homeless and street youth; juvenile offenders; youth failing in school; youth suspended or expelled from school; young parents and pregnant moms (under 22); youth arrested and unable to immediately return home; youth needing emergency care: youth needing peer support or cross-age mentoring; and youth with anger issues. They provide family counseling and activity programs.

5. STATE USE CONTRACTING PROGRAMS.

VR does not have any.

D. COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

1. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S PLANS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROCEDURES FOR THE TIMELY DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR THE STUDENTS

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is responsible to provide a free and appropriate public education. The mission of DPI's Special Education Division is to be a recognized and respected leader in providing a system of supports to schools to ensure that students with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential and become life-long learners. The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is the agency responsible to provide vocational rehabilitation service to students with disabilities. DPI provides guidance and direction to local school districts in the administration of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to provide accommodations for students with disabilities that are not served by the special education program. If VR closes categories under Order of Selection, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) will continue to be provided to students with disabilities who have begun receiving these services prior to the determination of eligibility and assignment to a closed priority category. If a student is determined eligible and assigned to a closed priority category prior to receiving Pre-ETS, they will not be able to receive Pre-ETS until such time they are taken off of the waitlist.

North Dakota VR has defined a student with a disability as an individual with a disability in a secondary, post-secondary, or other recognized education program, who is between the ages of 14-21, is eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is an individual with a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or students with disabilities including but not limited to: physical, sensory, intellectual, mental health, and communication. A youth with a disability is any individual with a disability who is between the ages of 14-24, regardless of education status.

The Governor of the State of North Dakota has designated VR offices be located in each of the eight regions. Each region serves a designated multi-county area, to provide vocational rehabilitation services. Each VR regional office has staff assigned to designated counties and local school districts to partner with the school in providing transition services. Every supervisor and rehabilitation counselor have a responsibility to liaison with local school districts, cultivate relationships, and provide education and information to partners. VR has a counselor assigned to each school in the state. VR staff develop and coordinate a set schedule (day of the week or month) with school personnel for appointments and meeting with VR eligible or potentially eligible students at the school.

The Department of Career & Technical Education (CTE) works to provide all North Dakota citizens with the technical skills, knowledge, and aptitudes necessary for successful performance in a globally competitive workplace. It is the responsibility of CTE, to the extent possible, to provide access to career and technical programs for high school and post-secondary students with disabilities across the state, as well as provide career awareness, work readiness skills, occupational preparation and training of workers throughout the state. VR provides guidance to local school districts in making accommodations to their curriculum and training process to engage students with disabilities in CTE programs.

The national CTE Perkins V Plan Collaboration Summit in December 2019 provided an opportunity for interdisciplinary teams comprised of state and local partners to work collectively in operationalizing Perkins V plans. A team from ND including state-level agency personnel from CTE, VR, and Special Education, along with a local education representative, attended. The summit provided the ND team the opportunity to forge closer collaboration efforts, and continue partnering to improve CTE access, equity, and inclusiveness for students with disabilities.

VR has policies and procedures that support coordination with public education to facilitate transition of students with disabilities. VR policies and procedures are reviewed and agreed upon by DPI. VR practice includes development of student individualized plans for employment (IPEs) within 90 days from the date of the determination of eligibility. This coordination includes identification and solicitation of referrals to VR from the local school districts Section 504 coordinators. Potentially eligible students in need of pre-employment transition services may receive these services as young as age fourteen.

The following is language directly from our MOU regarding Coordination:

Coordination

It is the joint responsibility of VR and DPI to:

- Coordinate services for students with disabilities.
- Design and deliver cross-training sessions to the staff of both parties regarding competitive integrated employment as the preferred vocational outcome for students and youth with disabilities.
- Promote and disseminate information that gives individuals and families resources to envision a future that includes competitive integrated employment.
- Meet regularly with one another and representatives of LEAs at the North Dakota Secondary Transition Community of Practice to address systems, policy, practice, and funding issues that facilitate or negatively impact the transition of youth with disabilities from school to work or post-secondary education.

- Align policy in order to facilitate the seamless transition of youth with disabilities from school to work or post-secondary education, minimize redundant services, and maximize resources in both systems.

It is VR's responsibility to:

- Ensure services are available statewide, including the provision of Pre-ETS for students who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services.
- Assist in the achievement of employment goals for individuals who have applied and been found eligible for VR services.
- Promote interagency coordination and timely delivery of services.

It is DPI's responsibility to:

- Request consultation and technical assistance from VR when needed for planning and implementation of transition services.
- Provide all existing educational, medical, psychological, and career assessments through a release of information as necessary for a determination of eligibility by the VR agency.
- Provide special education and related services as developed and documented for students with disabilities in an IEP.
- Provide VR with documentation of completion of transition services or Pre-ETS for students with disabilities.
- Provide representation on the VR State Rehabilitation Council and relevant committee participation.
- Encourage LEA to identify points of contact for field staff from VR.

Teachers and VR counselors provide co-instruction in local schools to offer students activities surrounding career exploration, self-advocacy, interest testing, and workplace readiness training. Workplace readiness training curriculums were developed by DPI, VR, and other partners through an NTACT TA grant, and are one of many tools that can be used for co-instruction.

VR and DPI continue to collaborate at a local level with colleges, work force offices, community rehabilitation providers (CRPs), independent living centers, and employers to provide transition fairs. These fairs provide transition students with hands-on opportunities to explore and experience various careers.

VR and North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind have co-sponsored a weekend retreat with the purpose of providing intensive pre-employment career services to youth with visual impairments. Due to the success of this retreat, plans are to continue sponsoring this event.

ND is involved with the National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes. A VR administrator, along with educators at a state and local level attend the national conference. The partners have also joined the state and local communities of practice, so there is a smooth transition for students who are deaf.

VR is also involved with the ND Dual Sensory Project in which strategies are found to work with individuals with a combined vision and hearing impairment. There are several partners

dedicated to this project such as VR, Helen Keller National Center, ND Vision Services/School for the Blind, ND School for the Deaf, and Minot State University.

The following is language directly from our MOU regarding Coordination of Section 511 Documentation Requirements:

Coordination of Section 511 Documentation Requirements

Youth with disabilities must complete several required activities that promote the consideration of competitive integrated employment before they can enter employment that pays less than federal minimum wage.

Under Section 511 of WIOA employers are prohibited from compensating any individual with a disability who is 24 years of age or younger at subminimum wage, unless the individual has documentation from VR of the following:

1. Pre-employment transition services through VR or transition services under the IDEA.
2. The individual was determined:
 - a. Ineligible for VR services, or
 - b. Eligible for VR services, had an approved IPE, and the individual was unable to achieve an employment outcome in competitive integrated employment and the case is closed disability too severe and unable to benefit.
3. Career counseling, along with information and referral to federal and state programs to help the individual explore competitive integrated employment.

VR, in collaboration with the SEA and LEA, has coordinated a process to ensure that, in accordance with 34 C.F.R § 397.31, neither the State educational agency nor the local educational agency will enter into contract or other arrangement with an entity, as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 397.5(d), for the purpose of operating a program under which a youth with a disability is engaged in work compensated at a subminimum wage.

2. INFORMATION ON THE FORMAL INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY WITH RESPECT TO:

A. CONSULTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASSIST EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SCHOOL TO POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING VR SERVICES;

To comply with WIOA, VR amended the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Transition Services and Pre-ETS effective December 20, 2019. The MOU addresses many areas including consultation and technical assistance; transition and pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) planning, outreach, coordination of section 511 documentation requirements, coordination of services, and financial responsibilities of the agencies.

The agreement identifies each agency's role and responsibility in consultation and technical assistance in the planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities that include vocational rehabilitation service.

The following is language directly from our MOU regarding consultation and technical assistance:

Consultation and Technical Assistance

It is the joint responsibility of VR and DPI to:

- Provide consultation and technical assistance to local VRs and LEAs on transition, career planning, community resources, employment, and post-secondary education.
- Provide consultation and technical assistance to local VR and LEA either in person or through alternative means, such as conference calls and video conferences.
- Utilize a common message when sharing information to local VR offices and LEA.
- Encourage LEA and VR staff to collaborate through their local Transition Community of Practice in planning and implementing efforts that are focused on the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including Pre-ETS and other vocational rehabilitation services.
- Identify and disseminate information about transition services, employment services, effective practices, training, and funding strategies that create positive employment outcomes to agency staff, partners, families, individuals, and public and private stakeholders.
- Inform each other and the LEA and VR staff about policies or procedural changes that may impact transition services.
- Provide technical assistance to identify potentially eligible and VR eligible students.

B. TRANSITION PLANNING BY PERSONNEL OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND EDUCATIONAL AGENCY THAT FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS;

Local VR and education staff identify a consistent system for referrals to VR. Typically, students should be referred two years before exiting school. Referrals are a collaborative effort between education and VR and are not limited to just those students in special education. Earlier referrals for students with more profound disabilities may be considered.

Students with disabilities may access Pre-ETS prior to applying to VR and prior to VR eligibility determination. This type of service may begin when a student requests it, or if the student has been recommended to receive one or more Pre-ETS and has shown documentation of a disability. The student may choose to apply to VR in order to determine if he or she is eligible for a more comprehensive scope of vocational rehabilitation services.

VR initiates outreach to potentially eligible students to identify those who need transition services and/or Pre-ETS. Eligibility for VR services typically is determined two years prior to the student's exit from secondary education. Eligibility may be determined prior to this typical timeline based on the need and expressed interest of the student. School districts shall be provided with contact information for the local VR office.

VR informs education staff, students, youth, and, as appropriate, families and authorized representatives regarding:

1. A description of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program;
2. Information regarding VR eligibility requirements;
3. Information regarding application procedures; and

4. Information about the scope of services that may be available to students and youth with disabilities.

IDEA mandates that local education agencies invite adult agency representatives, such as VR counselors, to mandated student-related meetings. These meetings are held for special education students at least annually. When VR staff is invited by a school district to attend a student meeting such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting, the VR staff considers how his or her involvement could be beneficial with regard to consultation, technical assistance, referral to VR, and the planning and coordination of service provision.

There may be times when a VR staff is not able to attend scheduled student-related meetings. Options for involvement beyond the physical presence of VR staff at the meeting could include the sharing of informational sheets and brochures, telephone conferencing, or other creative mechanisms developed at the local level.

In addition to student-related meetings, other opportunities to interact with educators, students, and families exist for VR participation. These may include parent nights, education staff meetings, school-based agency events, career fairs, and others. Attendance at these events fosters and advances collaboration with education. Many regions within North Dakota have a local Community of Practice (CoP). It is expected that one or more VR staff participate on these local teams and one representative from each of the local teams (not necessarily VR staff) reports back to the State CoP.

The IPE for students must be developed prior to the student exiting school. Once the IPE and IEP are established, there will be two active plans for the client. The IPE and the IEP will each reflect coordinated goals and a range of services for a period of time. Collaborating with education staff to align the two plans contributes in a positive manner toward the student gaining basic workplace skills, knowledge of specific occupational skills, long term career goals, etc.

The following is language directly from our MOU regarding transition and Pre-ETS planning:

Transition and Pre-Employment Services Planning

It is the joint responsibility of VR and DPI to:

- Facilitate and coordinate the smooth transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including the receipt of Pre-ETS, transition services, and other VR services.
- Provide training to LEA and VR counselors to assure transition and pre-employment services training will include activities such as the development and implementation of their IEP under Section 614(d) of the IDEA, coordination on Pre-Employment Services under Section 113, Accommodations under Section 504, and those related to Limitations on Sub-Minimum Wages under Section 511 of WIOA.
- Share current research findings and exchange professional literature on an ongoing basis.
- Collaborate on the provision of ongoing joint staff training and cross training of staff to ensure operational activities continue to meet the needs of the parties involved. Part of this training will include a two-day transition training/conference every other year and will be coordinated by the statewide Transition Community of Practice.

- Encourage volunteer employment opportunities and place emphasis on competitive integrated employment opportunities.
- Facilitate the local level engagement of potential employers to provide job shadows, work experience, etc. for students with disabilities.
- Provide training to local level LEA and VR to assure that the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) that VR develops for a student with a disability who is receiving special education services is coordinated with the IEP the LEA develops in terms of the goals, objectives, and services identified.
- Provide training and oversight to assure transition plans demonstrate a coordinated set of activities that prevent a break in services for students as they transition.
- Provide information that will inform students and their parents of the availability of the Client Assistance Program, a dispute resolutions program available to VR clients and participants in rehabilitation programs receiving federal funding.
- Coordinate with non-educational agencies for out-of-school youth which may include the following:
 - Job Service
 - Department of Corrections and Juvenile Justice
 - Child Welfare, including foster care
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Behavioral Health
 - Developmental Disabilities
 - Children’s Special Health
 - Parent Training Center
 - Family Advocacy Organizations
 - Tribal 121
 - Independent Living Centers
 - School for the Deaf
 - ND Vision Services
 - Assistive Technology
 - Autism Waiver Services
 - Community Rehabilitation Providers

It is VR’s responsibility to:

- Ensure VR staff are available to serve students attending the LEA.
- Determine eligibility for VR service and provide rehabilitation services to school-aged students with disabilities when referred by the LEA.

- Develop the IPE for students who are two years from exiting school, allowing for a smooth transition planning process, at the latest, just before exiting school; and no longer than 90 days from eligibility.
- Provide guidance to local LEAs and local VRs regarding the definition of a student with a disability which is an individual with a disability:
 - in a secondary, post-secondary, or other recognized education program;
 - who is between the ages of 14-21;
 - is eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the IDEA;
 - is an individual with a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or students with disabilities, including but not limited to, physical, sensory, intellectual, mental health, and communication.

Because the definition of a “student” with a disability for the VR program includes an individual with a disability for purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, it is broader than the definition under IDEA. VR agencies are authorized to provide transition services to this broader population of students with disabilities than LEA are authorized to provide under IDEA. Since the VR program may serve students with disabilities, including those individuals with a disability for purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, it is possible that these students may not have an IEP under IDEA, and therefore would not be eligible for or receiving special education or related services under IDEA.

DPI Responsibility:

- Age for transition planning:
-
- “A child with a disability remains eligible for special education until it is determined that a disability no longer exists and/or that the child no longer needs special education services; until the child exits services due to graduation with a diploma, or until he or she has attained 21 years of age or has not reached the age of 21 before August first of the year in which the individual turns 21.”
- DPI will provide training and oversight to the LEAs to assure the following transition requirements of IDEA are followed:
- DPI will encourage inviting VR to IEP meetings and other team meetings so VR can provide information, technical assistance, case consultation, and information/referral as needed for eligible or potentially eligible students;
- Provide IEP team-determined transition services;
- **Transition services** means a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that -

(1) Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

(2) Is based on the individual child's needs, considering the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes:

- Community experiences;
- Development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and,
- Acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

VR and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) are involved with a Community of Practice (CoP) for Transition. The mission of the group is to work toward building, supporting, and sustaining community partnerships and systems that promote and improve the scope, opportunity and quality of transition for youth with disabilities to adequately prepare for life and career beyond high school with the individualized necessary supports identified and in place before graduation/exit.

North Dakota's CoP focuses on working across groups and localities to share information, address issues, learn together, find shared goals, define shared work, and improve practice. Representatives from VR and DPI attend the National Capacity Building Institute, bringing back transition information from other states, which is then presented as a team at the state level with members going back to their local regions and sharing the information.

North Dakota's CoP has representation from most regions and continues to be very active, holding quarterly meetings. Since the actual service delivery takes place in the eight regions of the state, most regions have developed a regional transition CoP committee. Each regional committee is to develop committee goals which are in various phases of implementation. The committees use a specific document for their planning process entitled: "Essential Tools, Interagency Transition Team Development and Facilitation" published by the National Center on Secondary Education and Training and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The use of this document is helping to better coordinate efforts. The state director for DPI's Special Education and the State Transition Coordinator for VR provide technical assistance on how to continually improve their regional CoP.

C. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, OF EACH AGENCY, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR DETERMINING STATE LEAD AGENCIES AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSITION SERVICES;

The following is language directly from our MOU regarding financial responsibility:

Financial Responsibility

Joint Responsibility of VR and DPI:

- Parties to this MOU commit to the implementation of complementary programs to assist with the provision of transition and Pre-ETS to students with disabilities in the State, including students with the most significant disabilities, to enable them to achieve an employment outcome in competitive integrated employment;
- DPI and VR are financially responsible for the services they provide under their own laws and rules; and,
- DPI and LEA are financially responsible for the cost of services it is mandated to provide under IDEA, Part B.

There may be times when either the school or VR could provide a service. There is no “standard” for who provides what. The team makes the decision based on the needs of the student. In those cases, the team should consider the following factors when deciding:

- The VR counselor may consult with the VR regional administrator or VR state office to determine which entity should provide the service.
- Does the school or VR have the capacity to provide the service (rural schools tend to have fewer resources)?
- Could the school provide a portion of the service and VR another portion? For example, if a student needs workplace readiness training and work experience, and the school is only able to provide workplace readiness training, perhaps the school does the readiness training and VR provides the work experience.
- Has the IEP team or student’s team discussed what is in the best interest of the student in terms of providing services?
- What is the most efficient way to serve the student?
- Can the student be served through a Pre-ETS contract (a collaboration VR has with schools) whether the student is an open VR case or potentially eligible?
- Comparable benefits – are there other agencies that can provide the service?

VR serves everyone on an individual (case by case) basis. There is no “standard” for who provides what. The team makes the decision based on the needs of the client. Our guiding principles tell us that “collaborative partnerships and good communication are essential to success.

VR Responsibility:

- Provide outreach to all students with disabilities to make available Pre-ETS;
- Job exploration counseling;
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after-school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships;
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs;
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and,
- Instruction in self-advocacy.

DPI Responsibility:

- Nothing under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act shall be construed as reducing a LEA’s obligation under the IDEA to provide or pay for transition services that are also considered special education or related services and that are necessary for ensuring a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to children with disabilities.
- Schools are responsible to provide the necessary services the student needs, in each domain of the IEP. They are, academics, communicative status, adaptive characteristics, ecological factors, jobs and job training, recreation and leisure, home/independent

living, community participation, Post-Secondary Training and Learning Opportunities, and related services.

VR provides pre-employment transition services in addition to TA and consultation, to students ages 14 to 21. VR has many pre-employment transition purchase of service agreements across the state to expand on the pre-employment services formerly provided solely by the local schools and DPI is kept up-to-date on those activities.

VR expended \$2.2 million or approximately 21% of the FFY 2018 federal grant to fund statewide pre-employment transition services. VR will continue to commit at least 15% of the federal grant per year for these services. Required activities include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, training on self-advocacy, counseling on post-secondary opportunities, and workplace readiness training. In addition to services purchased based on approved IPEs for students, VR staff are providing services which includes tracking time spent for travel to rural areas. Under IDEA, the local school districts are required to provide transition services, however VR has entered into purchase of service agreements with local school districts to enhance or expand services.

D. PROCEDURES FOR OUTREACH TO AND IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO NEED TRANSITION SERVICES.

VR is working with DPI and local school districts to identify students with disabilities on an IEP. Transitioning students who are identified through the education unit's Section 504 coordinator are also referred to VR, and contacts are made with the guidance counselors to ensure students with special needs are aware of services through VR. Referrals are also received from independent living centers, human service centers, and community rehabilitation providers working with transition age students.

VR contacts potentially eligible students as early as age 14, thus when students do become VR eligible, relationships and trust have already been established. We also provide consultation and guidance which will help the potentially eligible students and their team with designing a roadmap for what should happen prior to VR eligibility so all team members are collaborating early on and facilitating a smooth transition.

VR counselors' outreach to schools on a regular basis. At the start of every school year counselors contact each of their respective schools to see who may benefit from VR services. That contact may be with special education teachers, school counselors, school social workers, through presentations to groups of students, individual students, parents etc. Many of our regions have "transition fairs" where outreach to students and parents happen. We also have "teen night out" where vendors and service providers are brought together so students and parents can visit with partners in the transition process. The state DPI and state VR not only highly support and promote these activities but also provide fiscal support.

The following is language directly from our MOU regarding outreach:

Outreach

It is the joint responsibility of VR and DPI to:

- Develop procedures for identification of and outreach to students with disabilities who need transition services and Pre-ETS (those eligible and potentially eligible for the program), such as information sharing at:
- IPE meetings

- Transition planning meetings
- Back-to-School Nights
- Transition and Career Fairs
- Presentations
- Orientations

It is VR's responsibility to:

- Inform applicants and eligible students with disabilities who are making the transition from programs under the responsibility of an educational agency to programs under the responsibility of VR, through appropriate modes of communication, about the availability of and opportunities to exercise informed choice; including the availability of support services for individuals with cognitive or other disabilities who require assistance in exercising informed choice throughout the VR process.
- Promote outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services as early as possible during the transition planning process. Outreach to these students will include, at a minimum, a description of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, eligibility requirement, application procedures, and scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals. Outreach activities can include the use of brochures, social media, attendance at back-to-school nights, transition events, etc.
- Provide training to all VR counselors and qualified staff on their role in providing outreach activities to students with disabilities to include those served in special education, served under Section 504, and those served in general education.
- Provide outreach activities that are not exclusive to students with disabilities in special education, but should include those students with disabilities for purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; students with disabilities receiving school psychological, health, nursing or social work services; and students with disabilities enrolled in an educational program and not in special education. VR agencies may also provide outreach to youth with disabilities who have dropped out of an education program or students who are at risk of dropping out of high school.

It is DPI's responsibility to:

- Work with VR to identify students with disabilities for referral to VR.
- Work with VR to identify referrals and encourage an application for VR services at least two years before students exit secondary education.

Additional Collaborative Efforts:

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Protection and Advocacy (P&A), North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD), the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), and VR partnered as a consortium to create the Launch My Life portal. It is a resource where youth, parents, counselors, teachers, and others can explore information about transition. The website will continue to be updated by the consortium. It may be accessed at: www.launchmylifend.com

VR is part of the advisory committee and provides some financial assistance for the Advancing Students Toward Education and Employment Program (ASTEP). The program offers students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to attend college.

VR has a representative on the ND IDEA State Advisory Committee (IDEA SAC) on the Education of Children with Disabilities. VR represents the vocational organization concerned with the provision of transition services to children with disabilities. The IDEA SAC: advises the state education agency (SEA) of the unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities; comments publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities; advises the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data; advises the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports; advised the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities; consulted with the SEA regarding the provisions of Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE); provided advice to the SEA in determining the risk ratio threshold above which disproportionality is significant.

In 2017, ND became involved with the National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes. VR staff along with educators attended the national conference. The partners also joined the state and local CoP, so there is a smooth transition for students who are deaf.

VR and North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind (NDVS/SB) collaborate to provide comprehensive services to transition students with visual impairment/blindness. VR sends a counselor and vision rehabilitation specialist to NDVS/SB during teen week to educate on vocational rehabilitation services and assist as needed. NDVS/SB hosts teen week four times per year.

VR coordinates with DPI to host a semi-annual Secondary Transition Conference. The event brings transition stakeholders together to collaborate and learn about best practices for transition students with disabilities. Stakeholders include teachers, VR counselors, students with disabilities, parents, community rehabilitation providers, etc.

E. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The utilization of community rehabilitation programs varies considerably throughout the state as needs and resources are unique to each region. The regional offices at the local level work closely with local providers to identify needs and to determine, with the provider, whether or not they are able to meet that need. The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Office meets with providers every six months to address any needs or concerns. In addition, the regional offices meet regularly with providers to address concerns, and partner to provide presentations to schools, individuals and families.

The triennial assessment of rehabilitation needs completed in FY 2018 included survey questions specific to community rehabilitation programs, their ability to meet individual's employment related needs and barriers encountered in meeting needs. Survey results are discussed in *Attachment (j)*.

VR continues to utilize information gathered from public hearings, input from providers and organizations; such as, the North Dakota Association of Community Providers (NDACP) and the North Dakota Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) to work more closely together. The agency will continue to make every effort to improve services to individuals when a problem is identified in a region. To ensure ongoing dialogue, NDACP and SILC are represented on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) where issues are discussed whenever appropriate.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to survey providers for input regarding their training needs. Current training available to community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) includes video conference training on various topics, DVR 101, and three online customized employment modules through the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities/Minot State University. The topics for the online modules are discovery, job development for customized employment, and systematic instruction.

As a major player on the North Dakota Workforce Development Council, VR continues to be an active partner as opportunities arise.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to be involved in the quarterly statewide Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council, Behavioral Health Planning Council, Autism Taskforce and systems committees.

Outcome-based job placement rates and guidelines were implemented October 1, 2012. In 2017, the supported employment guidelines and rates were updated to include a provision for extended services for youth. North Dakota has seventeen CRPs who provide supported employment services. Several CRP agencies have expressed concern regarding the outcome payment rate established in 2012. One CRP discontinued providing supported employment services, and two larger providers considered discontinuing supported employment services in 2019. In 2019, VR researched payment rates and service guidelines from various states; as well as, obtained rate information from WINTAC and North Dakota's Developmental Disabilities division for individual employment services (IES). In October 2019, VR implemented an hourly rate for job development and job coaching services for supported employment and customized employment services.

In addition, standards have been established for facilities and providers of services used by the agency. Community rehabilitation program agencies must be certified either by CARF, The Council of Quality and Leadership for People with Disabilities (CQL) or have an approved plan in place for acquiring accreditation. Medical service providers must be approved by the State Licensing Board through its agreement with the Department of Human Services. All educational and vocational technical programs must be recognized by the State Board of Higher Education.

In 2011, the department established CRP agreements. The department has, as part of the provider agreements, language that addresses accessibility of facilities, affirmative action plans, special communication needs, and fraud, waste, and abuse. Within the agreements, the providers identify the scope of service they will provide to clients. The CRP agreements are effective for two years, from October 2017 through September 2019.

F. ARRANGEMENTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) purchases services from two for-profit and 18 nonprofit community rehabilitation providers (CRPs), for the provision of supported employment and extended services.

Outcome-based job placement rates and guidelines were implemented October 1, 2012. In 2017, the supported employment guidelines and rates were updated to include a provision for extended services for youth. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has 20 CRPs who provide supported employment services. Several CRPs expressed concern regarding the outcome payment rate established in 2012. One CRP discontinued providing supported employment services, and two larger providers considered discontinuing supported employment services in 2019. In 2019, VR researched payment rates and service guidelines from various states; as well

as, obtained rate information from North Dakota's Developmental Disabilities division for individual employment services (IES). In October 2019, VR implemented an hourly rate for job development and job coaching services for supported employment and customized employment services.

All units that purchase extended services fall under the administrative control of the North Dakota Department of Human Services and have developed a memorandum of understanding which includes Medicaid and the Developmental Disabilities division. In addition, the Behavioral Health division manages a contract with Rocky Mountain Rehab for the provision of extended services for individuals with a serious mental illness, those with a traumatic brain injury, and others with diagnosis that are not able to access Medicaid services for extended services. A workgroup that includes VR, the North Dakota Brain Injury Network, Aging Services, Medicaid, County Social Services and a CRP is currently working to improve the process for individuals with a traumatic brain injury to access extended services through the Medicaid Waiver for Home and Community Based Services (Elderly & Disabled).

In cooperation with the Behavioral Health division, VR participated in a supported employment pilot project in two regional VR offices. The project uses an individualized placement services (IPS) evidence-based supported employment model for consumers with the dual diagnosis of mental illness and substance abuse. The project began March 2009 and continues in two out of eight regions of the state. The VR state office program administrator responsible for supported employment is involved with the project. Regional VR staffs are involved with the fidelity review teams.

During the 2019 legislative session, North Dakota lawmakers authorized the Department of Human Services to create a Medicaid 1915(i) state plan amendment, which allows North Dakota Medicaid to pay for additional home and community-based services to support individuals with specific behavioral health conditions like mental illness, an addiction or a brain injury.

For adults, these services could include, but are not limited to support for housing, employment, education, transition out of homelessness or institutional living and peer support. Potential services for children and youth could include respite care, educational support and transition to adulthood support. To be considered eligible for services, individuals must qualify for Medicaid or Medicaid Expansion. Vocational Rehabilitation, the Behavioral Health division and Medical Services will work together to develop a process to braid funding for supported employment and extended services and ensure that services are not duplicated.

In the fall of 2015, VR began a three-year pilot project. North Dakota VR established the three-year pilot to gather data, information and best practices the agency would need to consider when developing and implementing customized employment in the state. In addition, the project was designed to build the capacity to deliver customized employment services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities that lead to integrated and competitive employment opportunities for those currently receiving day support and segregated employment services. North Dakota VR contracted with the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) to coordinate and provide training, in-field mentoring and technical assistance for customized employment training for four CRPs. The four CRPs provide supported employment services in three of eight regions in North Dakota. Fifty-seven individuals received customized employment services during the three-year pilot. Of the 57 individuals served through the pilot 29 became employed in competitive integrated employment positions. Additional outcomes from the pilot included; CRP staff and individuals presenting on customized employment at the 2017 and 2018 North Dakota Association of Community Providers (NDACP) annual conferences and the national APSE conference in 2018.

North Dakota VR collected data regarding customized employment, which was utilized to develop customized employment resources, three on-line customized employment training modules, a payment rate, policy and standardized procedure.

In 2018, VR contracted with NDCPD to coordinate training and technical assistance activities for a new cohort of CRPs to begin customized employment training. This cohort would receive two years of training to include webinars, technical assistance and in-field mentoring. North Dakota VR selected four rural CRPs for the new cohort. Only CRPs who have participated or who are currently participating in VR's customized employment training initiative, coordinated through Minot State University, are authorized to provide customized employment. The eight CRPs provide customized employment services in six of eight regions in North Dakota. A customized employment policy and payment rate were developed and implemented in October 2019. In October 2019, VR implemented an outcome-based payment for discovery activities and an hourly rate for job development and job coaching services for customized employment services.

In the last legislative session, House Bill 1406, related to an income tax credit for the employment of individuals with developmental disability or severe mental illness, was passed. The bill was signed by the governor in April 2019. North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation and the North Dakota Office of State Tax Commissioner will jointly administer this program which will foster employers to hire individuals who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. The Customized Employment Tax Credit Program provides a ND income tax credit to employers for hiring an individual in one of the following target groups:

- Individuals with a developmental disability
- Individuals with a severe mental illness

Vocational Rehabilitation is responsible for determining if an individual meets the targeted group criteria and meet the following:

- has a most significant developmental or mental disability,
- is eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation's services,
- and requires customized employment in order to obtain competitive integrated employment

In partnership with the Department of Public Instruction, the Developmental Disabilities division and VR staff worked together to develop the "Transition Services Guide". The guide is meant to provide the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team with an overall understanding of the options available to transition aged students age 18-21, who are interested in competitive integrated employment and may require supported employment services.

G. COORDINATION WITH EMPLOYERS

1. VR SERVICES; AND

The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is committed to building strong, long-term relationships with business. The agency has a dual customer approach with business being a key consumer of VR service. Services provided to business include consultation, technical assistance and information that serves to build awareness of business to an available source of qualified employees. Long term engagement with business will result in incorporating the workforce needs of business when assisting consumers of DVR to develop goals that are consistent with in-demand occupations.

DVR has developed a team of Business Service Specialists (BSSs) within the state. Full time BSSs are employed in the division's larger offices which include Fargo, Minot, Grand Forks and Bismarck. Each cover one quadrant of the state ensuring a statewide program.

In order to foster collaboration with business, DVR:

1. Has best practice guidelines used to train staff to increase staff skill in assessing business needs.
2. Has standards for the number and extent of presentations and outreach to business by staff to include BSSs and rehabilitation counselors.
3. Participates as a member organization in business-led organizations.
4. Attends the Workforce Development Council meetings and disseminates information to VR staff on the business needs as expressed during council meetings.
5. Participates in the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation's National Employment Team (NET) to share referrals and best practices.

Efforts to increase the use of labor market information to align consumer goals with workforce needs, DVR:

1. Trains consumers to access state specific labor market information to assist with making decisions related to their vocational goals.
2. Trains VR staff to use labor market information in all interactions with consumers to reinforce the need for training for jobs that are in-demand in the local labor market.
3. Collaborates and coordinates with state workforce partners regarding workforce needs which may include activities such as visiting with new employers and touring businesses.
4. Utilizes job shadows and informational interviews to assist clients with understanding the various positions available in their communities.

2. TRANSITION SERVICES, INCLUDING PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, FOR STUDENTS AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES.

In addition, VR staff, teachers, and community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) are working with employers to place transition students in work experiences which will lead to competitive integrated employment. During the student's school year, the VR staff, CRPs, and teachers collaborate to provide work experience that is beneficial to the student. The team outreaches to potential employers in order to provide opportunities for placement. When an employer sees the success of a student in work experience, they often offer them permanent positions.

Our state also provides year-round work experience through our pre-employment transition service purchase of service contracts with local education agencies. The team, consisting of the contract staff, teachers and VR counselors, share their business contacts and outreach to potential employers in order to provide opportunities for placement.

H. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is organized within State government with the Department of Human Services (DHS) as the designated State agency. Medicaid, the

Developmental Disabilities (DD) division and the Behavioral Health division are all part of DHS. The placement of the VR program within DHS provides significant opportunities to develop informal and formal working relationships.

VR has historically collaborated with the State Medicaid agency. Examples of historical and more recent collaborative efforts between DHS Medical Services and VR include:

- Working together to inform consumers with disabilities of Medicaid's Workers with Disabilities Coverage that allows individuals with disabilities in the workforce to maintain Medicaid coverage.
- Partnering with staff from Medicaid's Autism Unit to identify youth with disabilities who have the potential to benefit from the State Autism Waiver service. Staff from the Autism Unit have provided technical assistance to VR staff that is related specifically to the effective service and supports to assist individuals with symptoms associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Data Sharing Memorandum of Understanding between Medicaid and VR related to the implementation of the Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplementary Social Security Income (PROMISE) grant. Included in the MOU is an agreement to share data across the programs and report this information on program participants to the Social Security Administration. In North Dakota, the PROMISE grant was administered through the North Dakota's Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) from October 2013 through July 2019.
- Utilizing Medicaid to fund extended services for consumers who have successfully secured employment through the provision of the VR supported employment program.

VR is an active stakeholder to the Medical Services division's Money Follows the Person Program.

2. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES; AND

VR has an MOU and high level of collaboration with the DHS DD division in the delivery of supported employment to consumers who experience an intellectual or developmental disability. VR policies and procedures instruct counselors to open a case for consumers with an intellectual or developmental disability who may require long-term services. The partnership between VR and DD utilizes VR funding to provide the initial training and job stabilization with DD using Medicaid Waiver funding to provide long term support.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

VR has a high level of collaboration with the DHS Behavioral Health division in the delivery of employment services to consumers who experience behavioral health issues. VR provides employment services including SEP for individuals with mental illness with extended services provided through the Behavioral Health division's funding. VR is also involved as a team member for individuals involved in the Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment (IDDT) program which allows for a smooth transition into VR SEP once those individuals have stabilized and are ready to pursue competitive integrated employment.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

1. SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS

I. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE AGENCY IN THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY;

The North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation’s (VR) system to collect personnel information provides annual data concerning the numbers and categories of personnel that are employed by the state agency as well as the projected retirements within five years. The numbers of personnel are then compared to the clients served to determine the projected number of staff needed, including the ratio of counselors to clients. Information on personnel development is described in Section 4 of this attachment.

Due to reduction in force required by the governor in 2018, VR’s staff count was reduced by two. As a result, there are currently 86 positions within VR. During FFY 2019, 3,721 individuals were served by VR. This results in an annual client to counselor ratio of 93 to 1. The VR agency will hire counseling staff as necessary, based on projected caseload numbers. Current staffing is sufficient to provide vocational rehabilitation services. Hiring additional counseling staff will be dependent upon the need to maintain a reasonable counselor to client ratio and the availability of funding and available staff FTEs. Vocational Rehabilitation currently has five counselor vacancies. In addition, there are two additional vacancies (one vision rehabilitation specialist and the director of vocational rehabilitation).

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation agreed to give up one full-time position in 2017, due to the Department of Human Services’ (DHS) budgetary concerns. The position identified was a regional administrator in a smaller region. From 2017 through February 2019 the smaller regional office was supervised by a regional administrator from another region. The regional administrator would travel to the smaller regional office to provide direct supervision of staff on a weekly basis. Having a remote supervisor was proven ineffective. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation hired an onsite regional administrator in February 2019 to provide direct training and guidance to the staff as well as carry a caseload.

In 2017, DHS developed a new process for filling vacant positions through the formation of the DHS hiring committee. All vacancies within DHS were reviewed and approved through the hiring committee. The implementation of the hiring committee impacted VR’s ability to fill vacant positions in a timely manner in 2017 and 2018. In turn, this impacted the number of individuals served through the VR program. The DHS hiring committee ended in late 2018.

During the next five years the agency estimates 17 staff members will be leaving the agency due to retirement alone. Additional vacancy positions are estimated at 25 counselors in the next five years. Traditionally, there is very little turnover in the non-counselor positions. In 2019, VR’s annual turnover rate for counselors was 25%, with an overall agency turnover rate of 14.77%. We do not anticipate the turnover rate to increase in 2020.

The table below shows the total number of staff positions, the current vacancies and projected vacancies due to retirement over the next five years:

Vocational Rehabilitation Positions with Current and Projected Vacancies

Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies Over the Next 5 Years
Director	1	1	0

Job Title	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	Projected Vacancies Over the Next 5 Years
State Office Administrators and Support Staff	9	0	4
Regional Vocational Rehabilitation Administrators	8	0	3
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	40	5	3
Vision Rehabilitation Specialists	7	1	1
Business/Career Assessment Specialists	6	0	1
Human Service Specialists/Aides and Rehabilitation Technician	6	0	5
Supported Employment Coordinator	1	0	0
Regional Support Staff	8	0	2
Drivers (part-time)	0	0	0

II. THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL CURRENTLY NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY; AND

Please see Table above.

III. PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL, BROKEN DOWN BY PERSONNEL CATEGORY, WHO WILL BE NEEDED BY THE STATE AGENCY TO PROVIDE VR SERVICES IN 5 YEARS BASED ON PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED, INCLUDING INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL EXPECTED TO RETIRE OR LEAVE THE FIELD, AND OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS.

Please see Table above.

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

I. A LIST OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE THAT ARE PREPARING VR PROFESSIONALS, BY TYPE OF PROGRAM;

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has 25 counselors and regional administrators who meet the Qualified Rehabilitation Professional (QRP), Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) standards. Currently, 51% of field staff meet the QRP standards. The VR agency anticipates

three additional staff will be eligible to take the CRC exam in the fall of 2019 and seven in calendar year 2020. Four central office administrators hold CRC certification.

All staff who obtain their CRC must maintain CRC status by participating in the required training. North Dakota VR is an approved continuing education provider through CRCC, and the HRD administrator coordinates and notifies staff of various training opportunities throughout the year. In addition, monthly training opportunities occur through video conferencing; as well as in-person training at the annual conference. In 2018, counseling staff received motivational interviewing training. Finally, in 2019 all counseling staff and regional administrators participated in a two-day customized employment training.

The regional administrators review counselor’s progress in reaching QRP standards at least annually during the counselor’s performance review. North Dakota does not have any institutions that prepare rehabilitation professionals. Therefore, staff who need further education are required to attend universities in other states. These schools are listed below. In addition, training sites used by North Dakota vision rehabilitation specialists are listed below.

Current counseling staff are taking post graduate classes to enable them to take the CRC exam. The numbers shown include staff currently enrolled in graduate programs or who have taken courses to meet the CSPD standards required by VR. The number of graduates in FFY 2019 are also shown below.

Institutions Providing Training to North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation Staff

Institution of Higher Ed	Students Enrolled	Graduates (FFY 2019)
Utah State University	4	1
Stout	3	0
University of West Virginia	2	0
South Dakota State University	5	4
University of Kentucky	2	1
Mississippi State University	1	1
University of Alabama Birmingham	1	0

II. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED AT EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS, BROKEN DOWN BY TYPE OF PROGRAM; AND

Please see Table above.

III. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED DURING THE PRIOR YEAR FROM EACH OF THOSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, OR WITH THE CREDENTIALS FOR CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE, BROKEN DOWN BY THE PERSONNEL CATEGORY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED, OR HAVE THE CREDENTIALS TO RECEIVE, CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE.

Please see Table above.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation lists all counselor job openings with Job Service North Dakota and the North Dakota State Government website. The agency preference is to hire

individuals with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling with credentials to qualify for certification. North Dakota VR will also consider the possibility of paid internships as an incentive to attract master's level interns with the intention of retaining them for counselor openings. For hard to fill counselor positions, the agency has considered offering a sign-on bonus when advertising for counselor positions.

At this time, universities in North Dakota do not offer a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling. Therefore, the agency is required to recruit graduate-level counselors from out-of-state. We are often unsuccessful in this effort because in most instances, our salaries are not competitive at the graduate level. If we are successful in recruiting graduate level counselors, we often find it difficult to retain them for the same reason. The University of North Dakota does offer a master's degree in counseling with an emphasis on rehabilitation and they have reached out to VR to determine what they can do to expand their program. Through our discussions, they are looking at adding the necessary courses to meet the program requirements as well as making the program available through their distance learning platform. In addition, VR has started sending job announcements to them to post on their student site.

North Dakota VR recruits individuals with disabilities and provides reasonable accommodations needed to perform essential job functions. In addition, reasonable accommodation requests from current staff are addressed as they arise.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

VR recognizes that we will be losing valuable experience and managerial knowledge with the high level of retirees who are currently administrators in the regional and central offices. Our Success in Leadership initiative (launched in 2007) was a major aspect of our succession planning efforts. Due to entering Order of Selection, Success in Leadership has not met. Applications are currently on hold.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has established a policy to ensure that professionals providing vocational rehabilitation services are appropriately and adequately trained to meet "Qualified Rehabilitation Professional Standards". The standard established is that they are nationally certified rehabilitation counselors.

A. Senior Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor requires a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Counseling, Social Work, Psychology, Rehabilitation Administration/Services, Psychometrics, Behavioral Health, Behavioral Science, Disability Studies, Human Relations, Human Services, Marriage and Family Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Special Education or Vocational Assessment/Evaluation AND Two years of experience as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; AND Certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC).

If unable to find qualified candidates, will consider filling as a:

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor requires a bachelor's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Counseling, Social Work, Psychology, Rehabilitation Administration/Services, Psychometrics, Behavioral Health, Behavioral Science, Disability Studies, Human Relations, Human Services, Marriage and Family Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Special Education, Vocational Assessment/Evaluation or Human Development & Family Science.

AND one of the following:

- Two years of experience working with persons with disabilities in a direct service capacity; or
- One year of work experience as a vocational rehabilitation counselor; or
- A master's degree in one of the above disciplines.
Preference will be given to applicants who meet the ND Qualified Rehabilitation Professional (QRP) standards as follows: a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC); a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a counseling-related field from a program accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Counselor Education (CORE) or the Council on Accreditation of Counseling-Related Programs (CACRP); OR a master's degree in a closely-related field and eligibility to write the Council on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) Examination.

Individuals selected for any Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor position will be required to meet the ND Qualified Rehabilitation Professional (QRP) standards within five years from the date of appointment.

B. Individuals who do not meet personnel standards will develop a training plan that will identify how they will meet the personnel standards. The plan will also include timelines for meeting the personnel standard which must be approved by their regional administrator and the central office training coordinator.

C. At the present time, individuals requiring retraining to meet the personnel standards enroll in Utah State University's Distance Education Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling program, University of Wisconsin Stout, Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling Program, University of Kentucky Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, South Dakota State University and University of West Virginia, Master's Degree in Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling to complete the educational requirement for qualified rehabilitation personnel standards.

VR is waiting to hear which universities will be receiving the RSA Long-Term Training/CSPD Scholarships along with the changes there will be in the funding support available. Costs not covered by the scholarships are covered by VR's 110 funds.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

North Dakota VR has a strong working relationship with its workforce partners. This relationship allows staff to share information regarding business needs, current openings, and high demand occupations. The VR director is an active member of the Workforce Development Council. VR regional staff regularly meet with Job Service ND personnel and are members of their local Adult Education boards to share information regarding the evolving labor force and needs of individuals with disabilities. North Dakota VR has six staff members who provide education, training and consultation for counselors related to workforce needs, labor market information, and the evolving workforce in the 21st Century; these positions include four business services specialists (BSS) and two career assessment specialists (CAS). All new counselors are required to complete four Career Index Plus webinars offered through WINTAC. Through monthly cyber chats and the state's annual training conference, VR staff are provided training on business engagement, labor market information, and other topics related to the evolving workforce.

In 1999, North Dakota VR's QRP standards were implemented. The goal established at implementation was 50% of staff on board October 1, 1999, would meet the QRP standards by October 2004 and 100% by October 2009. All staff hired after that date are required to meet QRP standards within five years of hire. Currently, 100% of the original staff meet the QRP standards. Staff hired after that date have either met the standard or are in the process of doing so as required.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A. A SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS WITHIN THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ASSESSMENT, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING, JOB PLACEMENT, AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TRAINING IMPLEMENTED IN COORDINATION WITH ENTITIES CARRYING OUT STATE PROGRAMS UNDER SECTION 4 OF THE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998; AND

VR assesses the training needs of the current staff at all levels - administrative, counselor, and support staff. The needs assessment focuses on two levels of training (1) statewide training topics that are consistent with the State Plan, Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Regulations, RSA 911 requirements, and RSA priorities, and (2) regional training that addresses issues identified through case reviews, performance appraisals and other training that will assist staff in progressing toward their career goals.

Dollars are allocated for staff to attend workshops, webinars, conferences, formal course work training in rehabilitation counseling, medical assessment, ethics, job placement, rehabilitation technology, ADA, reauthorization, and other rehabilitation related training. All employees have access to these training opportunities. The agency's continuing education program also allows reimbursement for the cost of tuition and books for classes that are related to job duties and will increase the employee's skills in specific areas.

B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE FROM RESEARCH AND OTHER SOURCES TO DESIGNATED STATE UNIT PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS.

VR receives and distributes information such as rehabilitation journals, Rehabilitation Briefs, National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Research Materials, topics researched by the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, as well as videos and printed materials on related rehabilitation issues. Information is disseminated through the state email system and hard copies, CDs, DVDs are sent through the mail. North Dakota VR supports participation in professional organizations by encouraging attendance and providing registration and travel expenses for professional organization meetings and conferences.

5. PERSONNEL TO ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION NEEDS

North Dakota VR provides interpreter services to individuals who have limited English speaking ability. Staff are provided information regarding Video Remote Interpreting (VRI). This is an on-demand service that provides communication between deaf or hard-of-hearing persons or other languages in which VR staff can be in the same location, utilizing an interpreter by way of computer with a webcam and internet connection or a tablet using a cellular connection.

In several regions where minority populations are more predominant, VR staff have attended training on the customs and culture of minority groups. These materials are available to all VR staff.

North Dakota VR provides personnel or obtains services to accommodate clients in need of appropriate modes of communication. Agency staff members who have an interest are encouraged to take sign language classes. In regions that do not have personnel trained in alternate modes of communication, this service is purchased.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

North Dakota VR coordinates CSPD efforts with the CSPD requirements under IDEA. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is represented on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) where information on training conferences is shared and invitations extended to attend each other's conferences and other training activities. VR is also a member of the statewide Community of Practice that has broad-based representation of agencies involved in various aspects of transition. Members of the Community of Practice, including VR staff, were also part of multi-agency team that participated in the Annual Capacity Building Institute to identify ways to improve transition services in the state. In addition, VR has one staff on the planning committee for the upcoming North Dakota DPI Secondary Transition Interagency Conference. VR will support staff attendance for the conference in November 2019.

North Dakota VR continues to offer a Teacher Internship Program. The VR Teacher Internship Program is designed to provide teachers with an opportunity to work closely with their local VR office and transition counselors. The teachers participate in a three-week internship, beginning with an in-depth orientation to the VR process. The project provides teachers with information regarding the VR program and process, adult agencies, employers' needs, labor market information, disability legislation, and has enhanced relationships between teachers and VR staff. Due to the success, VR plans to continue to offer this program.

North Dakota VR has and will continue to provide information to our staff and partners on our implementation of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act and pre-employment transition services through our cyber chats, provider meetings and written communication (email).

J. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

1. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REHABILITATION NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING WITHIN THE STATE, PARTICULARLY THE VR SERVICES NEEDS OF THOSE:

A. WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

North Dakota Division of Vocational Rehabilitation conducts a comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs every three years. Together with the State Rehabilitation Council's Evaluation Committee and research analysts from the designated state agency's research team, VR began planning for the FFY 2018-2020 assessment in 2016 and conducted the activities in 2017. The state will conduct the next activities in 2020 for the 2021-2023 Statewide Assessment. The results of the CSNA will be used to develop goals, priorities, strategies and actions for both VR's State and Strategic Plans.

To obtain assess unmet needs, slightly different surveys geared to assess the various areas were sent to:

- those involved with special education at the secondary level and transition counselors,
- Community Rehabilitation Providers,

- An email blast to advocates, and
- An open invitation to the general public.

The rehabilitation needs identified, cut across all types and “categories”. No needs were unique to any one of the groups for whom this assessment was conducted. Rather, the unique needs are identified with each individual during the vocational rehabilitation process.

For individuals with the most significant disabilities, the most commonly reported needs identified were help with finding a job and vocational/employment counseling. Other highlighted needs were medical treatment/services.

B. WHO ARE MINORITIES;

In North Dakota, 44.9% of the population is comprised of minorities. The breakdown of minorities employed during FFY 2017 is as follows: Other, comprised of individuals who have identified as having more than one race, is the largest of these minority groups at 18.7%,

12.6% are Native Americans, 6.9% are Hispanic, 11.5% are Black/African American and 2.1% are Asian/Pacific Islander.

One of the largest minority groups in ND is American Indian. There are four reservations in ND, three of which have Tribal 121 Projects. VR collaborates with and frequently has dual cases with those programs.

For all minority groups, the most commonly identified unmet needs were assistance with financial aid, finding and/or keeping a job, and vocational/employment counseling.

C. WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM;

It should be noted that the one identified group who is unserved or underserved are individuals who are homeless. This group is not identified by one racial group. Of the individuals who have been considered unserved or underserved by VR, respondents did not have strongly ranked employment needs; the employment needs that were unmet were spread throughout the choices. The most commonly identified employment need not being met was assistance with finding and/or keeping a job, ongoing training/support on the job, and increased opportunities for self-employment.

D. WHO HAVE BEEN SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM; AND

VR has a good relationship with and collaborates when possible with our Workforce partners. For individuals with disabilities who also receive services through the statewide workforce development system, the most commonly identified unmet needs were workplace relationship training, followed by assistance with finding and/or keeping a job and finally physical and mental restoration services. Tied for third were: assistive technology, transportation, one-on-one job training and on-going training.

E. WHO ARE YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING, AS APPROPRIATE, THEIR NEED FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES OR OTHER TRANSITION SERVICES.

Youth and students with disabilities did not have strongly ranked employment needs. Financial Aid (22.7%) and assistance with finding and/or keeping a job (13.5%) were identified as their top employment needs. Vocational counseling is also identified in the top three.

In addition, VR attempted to conduct a Transition Survey of educators to ensure Pre-ETS services are available statewide to all students with disabilities who need them or to identify where the gaps/unmet needs are within the state. There was an extremely poor return so the data does not hold any validity.

2. IDENTIFY THE NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP, OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE; AND

As part of the 2018 - 2020 Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs, a link to the online survey was sent to individuals and directors of institutions and agencies chosen because of their likelihood to have a connection with or interest in individuals with disabilities. This included community rehabilitation programs, supported employment providers, psychosocial rehabilitation centers, Disability Support Services in the North Dakota University System, occupational therapy departments, and directors of special education. A total of 43 CRP provider surveys were returned. In addition, a link to the online survey was sent to advocates. These individuals were chosen based on their role with certain agencies or as a member of boards, advisory councils and committees who are connected to, and advocate for, individuals with disabilities. This included advocacy groups, disability organizations, Client Assistance Program, SRC and Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) members, Centers for Independent Living, various state agencies, 121 projects, and VR staff. A total of 31 Advocate surveys were returned. An online version of the survey was provided with the option for alternative formats to give respondents flexibility in completing the survey. Responses were received from every region in the state with higher populated regions taking a greater share. Descriptive statistics and qualitative methods were applied for data analysis.

The surveys were designed to enable a comparison between Community Rehabilitation Programs' responses and non-CRP responses to the same set of questions. Questions included met and unmet employment-related needs, barriers encountered by CRPs and allowed for suggestions for improving services and removing barriers.

Unmet Needs:

CRPs identified transportation as being at the top of the list of unmet needs, followed by support on the job, and assistance with finding and/or keeping a job. Advocates indicated transportation was the most significant unmet need.

Transportation continues to be in the top of the list of unmet needs. VR is an active member of the ND Transit State Management Plan Committee. We will continue to advocate for increased services. We will also provide referrals and counseling and guidance to our clients on how to access the available transportation.

There are concerns with the need for assistance with finding and/ or keeping a job as well as support on the job.

VR is working with providers to try to expand the services that they are able to provide. A pilot project has been launched to explore expanded SEP which will provide additional intensive training for providers and will result in policy amendments. There will also be continued education and awareness activities for the business community, lawmakers, service providers, educators, family members, and the general public. VR will also continue to work with

Extended Services Funding sources to ensure individuals are able to utilize SEP and access supports once the VR case is closed. *Attachment (q)*

Barriers:

CRPs felt that funding for agency operations and services was the most significant barrier to their ability to provide employment related services followed by funding for staff and VR staff turnover. Advocate respondents felt that there are insufficient community resources followed by funding for extended services and funding for agency operations and services which tied with the distance to consumers.

Outcome based job placement rates and guidelines were implemented October 1, 2012. Two work groups were established from the semi-annual provider meeting to review and update SEP guidelines and job development and placement services. A standardized fee for service was implemented with an annual 3% inflationary increase. During the 2018 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Survey, providers indicated insufficient funds for the level of intervention they were providing. During the 2017-2019, legislative session lawmakers requested department budgets be reduced by 10%. The annual 3% inflationary increase did not occur. In 2017, the Supported employment guidelines and rates were updated. The updated included a provision for Extended Services for Youth. In addition, the fee structure for supported employment was adjusted to allow for additional upfront training dollars for individuals once they became employed.

Attachment (e)

Additional discussion relative to community rehabilitation programs is found in *Attachment (e) - Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers.*

3. INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES FOR TRANSITION CAREER SERVICES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH SERVICES ARE COORDINATED WITH TRANSITION SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

Youth and students with disabilities did not have strongly ranked employment needs. Financial Aid (22.7%) and assistance with finding and/or keeping a job (13.5%) were identified as their top employment needs. Vocational counseling is also identified in the top three. In addition, VR attempted to conduct a Transition Survey of educators to ensure Pre-ETS services are available statewide to all students with disabilities who need them or to identify where the gaps/unmet needs are within the state. There was an extremely poor return so the data does not hold any validity.

Based on information from the Department of Public Instruction in 2017, there are approximately 4,409 students who are between the ages of 14-21. These individuals could potentially receive Pre-employment Transition Services, Title 1 and/or supported employment services during the next one to seven years. VR and DPI collaborate to provide transition planning for students with disabilities age 14 and in 9th grade to 21 years of age. Some of the major disability categories of these students include the following:

Primary Disability	Total by Disability	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21
Autism	456	90	107	76	80	46	31	21	5
Deaf Blind	1				1				

Primary Disability	Total by Disability	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21
Emotional Disturbance	504	108	120	117	99	41	16	3	
Hearing Impairment	42	13	7	4	11	4	2	1	
Intellectual Disability	428	64	61	55	66	62	59	50	11
Other Health Impairment	875	188	187	202	189	78	18	12	1
Orthopedic Impairment	23	5	7	3	3	3	2		
Speech Language Impairment	190	54	48	37	31	16	3		1
Specific Learning Disability	1843	473	402	417	333	197	17	4	
Traumatic Brain Injury	27	3	7	4	6	3	1	2	1
Visual Impairment	20	6	5	4	3	1	1		
Total by Age	4409	1004	951	919	822	451	150	93	19

In order to provide these transition students with pre-employment, in addition to the services provided by VR staff, VR has entered into purchase of service agreements with many local school districts to enhance or expand services.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

Based on data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, North Dakota has over 37,400 residents between the ages of 16 and 64 who report a disability and consequently could be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

It is estimated that during fiscal year 2021, a total of 3,638 individuals will receive vocational rehabilitation services. The estimated breakdown is 3,298 individuals will receive services through Title I.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

The remaining 340 individuals will receive services through Title VI, Part B.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION.

See Table in (4) below.

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

NDVR is currently under an order of selection. Beginning December 17, 2012, NDVR began serving individuals in Priority Category 1 on the Order of Selection wait list. As of February 2, 2014, NDVR has opened all categories and no longer has a wait list.

4. THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY.

The table below shows potential eligible individuals who will receive services through Title I and Title VI in FFY 2021; the estimated annual cost to provide services to individuals who are in a service status is \$2.57 million.

Priority	Served	Estimated Cost
Priority Category 1a	146	\$103,568
Priority Category 1b	2256	\$1,599,274
Priority Category 2	982	\$695,589
Priority Category 3	254	\$170,210
Total	3638	\$2,568,641

We are estimating that there will be 340 individuals eligible for Title VI, Part B funds for a total of \$316,667.

L. STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

1. IDENTIFY IF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES WERE JOINTLY DEVELOPED AND AGREED TO BY THE STATE VR AGENCY AND THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, IF THE STATE HAS A COUNCIL, AND JOINTLY AGREED TO ANY REVISIONS

VR and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) with representation from Tribal 121 programs, the client assistance program and the State Independent Living Council (SILC), have jointly developed the goals and priorities for the State VR program. The SRC meets quarterly to provide input to the VR agency on emerging need and this input is significant in shaping the goals and priorities of the VR agency. VR and the SRC held public forums this past year and invited consumers, parents, employers and other stakeholders to provide input on the goals and priorities of the VR program. VR and the SRC, during the Council's quarterly meeting held on January 15, 2020 jointly developed the goals and priorities for the VR program.

The goals and priorities are in alignment with WIOA and the Vision, Goals and Strategies in the Unified State Plan.

2. IDENTIFY THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN CARRYING OUT THE VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Goal 1: VR will assist 1,100 individuals with disabilities obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment during PY20 and PY21 by June 2022.

Priority 1: To comply with State and Federal regulations.

Priority 2: To provide opportunities for people with disabilities to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment.

Goal 2: VR developed a system to certify eligible individuals for the customized employment state tax credit through April 30, 2021.

Priority 1: To comply with HB 1406 passed in the 2019 State legislative session.

Priority 2: To incentivize employers to hire individuals with the most significant disabilities who require customized employment.

Goal 3: VR will provide 2,720 services to employers during FFY20 and FFY21 by September 2021.

Priority 1: To comply with Federal regulations.

Priority 2: To provide opportunities for people with disabilities to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment.

Priority 3: To provide education and awareness to employers on the benefits of hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities.

3. ENSURE THAT THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

A. THE MOST RECENT COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT, INCLUDING ANY UPDATES;

The goals and priorities are based on the results of the 2018-2020 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) which is described in *Attachment (j)*, public input gathered in February 2018, and VR's Managing for Results Strategic Planning.

B. THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OF SECTION 116 OF WIOA; AND

The goals and priorities of the combined state plan are directly informed by section 116 performance accountability standards. VR's performance standards will need to be brought

into alignment with the new performance accountability standards. During the first two years of the four year Unified State Plan, VR will report performance measures to RSA which will establish a baseline used to determine future performance accountability.

C. OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VR PROGRAM, INCLUDING ANY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL AND FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MONITORING ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 107.

VR’s most recent offsite monitoring was conducted in 2019. We are currently waiting for the report from RSA.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES

Services are offered to individuals based on service status at the time categories are closed, the priority category and the date of application. At this time, we continue to provide services to all individuals.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER

The division projects total program expenditures for FFY 2020 of \$14,442,031. The total projected revenue from the federal grant required state match and program income for FFY 2020 is \$13,810,362. Thus, the difference between program revenue and expenditures for FFY 2020 is a shortfall of \$631,669. The division will use estimated FFY 2019 carryover dollars to fund the difference between revenue and expenditures.

The division’s projected expenditures include providing pre-employment transition services as well as activities related to providing customized and supported employment to individuals currently receiving employment service in sheltered settings or are below the federal minimum wage. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction provided the division with information about the number of students with disabilities that will exit secondary special education programming.

Primary Disability Code	Total of	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
AUT	480	90	91	101	82	58	26	24	8
DB	1					1			
ED	521	111	121	112	111	48	11	6	1
HI	37	8	12	5	4	6	1	1	
ID	421	69	68	56	58	68	48	44	10
OHI	903	224	194	179	180	100	14	9	3
OI	25	3	5	7	3	2	3	2	
SI	180	50	48	38	27	13	3	1	

Primary Disability Code	Total of	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
SLD	1887	458	461	388	375	181	20	3	1
TBI	22	1	2	7	5	4	2	1	
VI	17	1	6	3	4	2	1		
Total	4494	1015	1008	896	849	483	129	91	23

There is an increase in the number of students with disabilities that will exit secondary education and have the potential to apply for VR service. This fact along with the requirement to allocate 15% of the division's budget for pre-employment transition service together pose a significant decrease in the amount of funding available to serve all adults with disabilities.

With input from the State Rehabilitation Council, the division will continue to implement an Order of Selection.

North Dakota VR entered Order of Selection in March of 2012 as a result of increased program expenditures, particularly for case services, that exceeded the federal VR grant award and state required match in excess of 3.2 million dollars. Carry over of federal funds from prior years was depleted due to expenditures exceeding program revenue. The division has developed management tools that include the forecast of future revenue and expenditures. The pattern of expenditures exceeding the program revenue is projected to continue and will likely result in a wait list for service.

Additional factors that may influence the decision to implement an Order of Selection are:

1. The state of ND has made a concerted effort to reduce the number of state employees thus we anticipate that it will be difficult to add any new positions. That paired with the increasing numbers of transition students who would be potentially eligible for VR and who we are required to provide pre-employment transition services and increasing applicant numbers will result in categories being closed due to limited staff resources.
2. Fifty seven percent of VR's case service expenditures were for training in FFY 2019. This percentage is expected to increase with the addition of customized employment and overall growth in the number of clients expected to qualify for supported employment.
3. Due to the current economic conditions impacting the state, there may not be sufficient funds to provide the full range of services to all eligible individuals therefore making it necessary for the division to close categories.

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS

All categories are currently open. This chart includes individuals who are currently open and an estimate of new applicants during FFY 2021. We estimate that 3,638 individuals will receive services and 635 individuals will exit services with employment after receiving services. We anticipate an estimated 498 individuals will exit services without achieving an employment goal.

PRIORITY CATEGORY	ESTIMATED NUMBER TO BE SERVED	ESTIMATED NUMBER REHABILITATED	ESTIMATED NUMBER TO EXIT NOT REHABILITATED AFTER RECEIVING SERVICES	TIME WITHIN WHICH GOALS ARE TO BE ACHIEVED	COST OF SERVICES
1a and 1b	2402	403	358	20 months	\$1,702,842
2	982	170	110	20 months	\$695,589
3	254	62	30	15 months	\$170,210

D. TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER; AND

The estimated time to achieve goals is 20 months for priority categories one and two; 15 months for priority category three.

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

All eligible individuals with disabilities are assigned a priority category, notified of their assigned category, and notified of their right to appeal that assignment. All necessary and reasonable services shall be available to individuals receiving services under an Order of Selection.

Description of Priority categories:

Priority Category 1A - Individuals determined to have a most significant disability

1. meets the significant disability criteria as defined in priority category 2; AND
2. has a severe physical, mental or sensory impairment that seriously limits four or more functional capacities such as mobility, work skills, self-care, interpersonal skills, communication, self-direction, or work tolerance in terms of an employment outcome; AND
3. requires multiple vocational rehabilitation services; AND
4. requires vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time (six months or more).

Priority Category 1B - Individuals determined to have a most significant disability

1. meets the significant disability criteria as defined in priority category 2; AND
2. has a severe physical, mental or sensory impairment that seriously limits two or three functional capacities such as mobility, work skills, self-care, interpersonal skills, communication, self-direction, or work tolerance in terms of an employment outcome; AND
3. requires multiple vocational rehabilitation services; AND
4. requires vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time (six months or more).

Priority Category 2 - Individuals with significant disabilities

1. individuals who are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income; **OR** have all of the following:
2. those who have significant physical or mental impairments which seriously limit one functional capacity (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and
3. whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time (over six months); and
4. who have one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from: amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitations.

Priority Category 3 - Other eligible individuals with disabilities

1. those who have a significant physical or mental impairment which creates a significant barrier to employment; **AND**
2. requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

All applicants, including those in trial work programs, shall receive services necessary to determine eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services and Order of Selection priority classification without regard to the availability of funds or the implementation of the Order of Selection. Such services shall be provided on a timely basis in accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

If VR closes categories, all individuals who have an individualized plan for employment will continue to receive services. As funding allows, categories will be opened starting with individuals with the most significant disabilities who are in Priority Category 1A, then those in Priority Category 1B, then those in Priority Category 2 and finally Priority Category 3. If there isn't the capacity to open the entire category, then individuals will be activated based on a chronological order by application date.

2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT

VR has not elected to serve eligible individuals other than by the previously mentioned description at this time.

N. GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

1. SPECIFY THE STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDS RECEIVED UNDER SECTION 603 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (VR) primary goal for the utilization of Title VI-B funds is to provide training and stabilization for an estimated 340 individuals with the most severe disabilities per year. It's projected that during PY 2021, 340 individuals will be designated as eligible for supported employment and 76 will become employed. During FFY 2019, 337 individuals were designated as eligible for supported employment and 76 became employed. The breakdown by disability of those employed is expected to be similar to that of FFY 2019: cognitive impairments – 55%; psychosocial impairments – 39%; physical impairments – 5%; and communicative impairments – 1%.

VR will continue agreements whenever and wherever appropriate with the two for-profit and 18 non-profit community rehabilitation agencies to provide training and stabilization throughout the state. Extended services will also be provided by the community rehabilitation agencies with state general funds, and Medicaid waived services for individuals who qualify for services through the Developmental Disabilities division and are eligible for Medicaid services. For youth who qualify for and require SE but will not immediately be able to access extended services funded through state general funds or Medicaid waived services, VR will cover the cost of extended services, as outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Services are paid at the extended services rate, established by the Behavioral Health division. The VR counselor will provide the individual and family with the necessary information and referral so they may apply for or consider alternate extended services funding.

VR will ensure a minimum of 50% will be spent on youth and that those funds are met with a 10% match. Based on previous patterns, VR is confident that achieving this set aside will not be a concern. The latest data indicates that 50% of the SEP funds were spent on youth.

2. DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITIES TO BE CONDUCTED, WITH FUNDS RESERVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 603(D), FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING:

A. THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED SERVICES FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED 4 YEARS; AND

Youth, with the most significant disabilities who require supported employment to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment, will receive training and stabilization through Title VI or general VR federal funds. If funding for extended services is not available for maintenance, extended services will be provided with state/federal VR funds for a period not to exceed 4 years.

B. HOW THE STATE WILL LEVERAGE OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS TO INCREASE RESOURCES FOR EXTENDED SERVICES AND EXPANDED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

VR will continue to work with the Behavioral Health division, Developmental Disabilities division, Division of Aging Services, County TBI Waiver Services and service providers to coordinate funding and services.

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), working with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), is involved in ongoing data analysis, soliciting input from the public, to include VR consumers and partner stakeholders, in determining the strategic direction of the agency that are inclusive of the goals and priorities in Attachment (I) . The data sources used in identification and evaluation of the agency strategies include the Triennial Needs Assessment and information extracted that reports on the progress toward attaining the standards and indicators. VR has contracted with an independent research company to conduct client satisfaction surveys. The scope of the survey has been expanded. The expanded survey provides VR with current data that is used to identify trends and patterns, and is used to improve services for individuals. It is also used to capture data for the Triennial Needs Assessment. The annual case review process is used to further evaluate the effectiveness of rehabilitation counseling and guidance services provided across the agency. The Designated State Agency conducts biannual stakeholder surveys that provide important information to the agency with regard to emerging needs.

VR continues to expand services to businesses which will result in an increased number of individuals employed and those able to maintain employment.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS

VR continues to support assistive technology as an integral part of each stage of the VR process. When assistive technology needs are identified, further assessment and/or referrals are provided as necessary to include referrals to ND Assistive, the State Tech Act Program. VR is a member of the ND Assistive Advisory Council and the AT Re-use Work Group. Staff at Assistive meet the highest standard of their profession, providing assistive technology assessment and training, and are certified by the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America. Assistive maintains a blog with updates posted several times per week on their website. The topics of the blog posts rotate between the categories of AT equipment, AT funding, AT anecdotes, and staying at home through the use of AT. Assistive maintains an active presence through social media to include Facebook. In addition to the two demonstration labs, Assistive has expanded their Fargo and Mandan presence to include a Home First Show Room that is a complete home environment that provides a homelike atmosphere for demonstration of AT. Assistive has a booth during the VR annual conference and presents on various topics to staff. All new VR staff tour the Assistive demonstration labs during new staff training. Assistive, the North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind, and VR have developed a joint strategic plan to increase the availability and use of AT by those with blindness/low vision.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM

North Dakota has seen a significant increase in the number of individuals who are minorities. Currently, 44.9% of the population is comprised of minorities which is a dramatic change from 9.9% in 2015. This increase is primarily due to the influx of people coming to work in the oil industry as well as new Americans. Other, comprised of individuals who have identified as having more than one race, is the largest of these minority groups at 18.7%, 12.6% are Native American, 6.9% are Hispanic, 11.5% are Black/African American and 2.1% are Asian/Pacific Islander.

During PY 2019, 16.1% of all the individuals who became employed through VR services were minorities. This is almost double the 8.9% reported last time. The breakdown of minorities employed during PY 2018 is as follows: 7.6% identified as having more than one race, 4.3% Native American, 3.1% Black/African American and 1.0% Asian/Pacific Islander. 3.3% had an ethnicity of Hispanic.

Historically, the agency's strategy to improve performance was outreach to the four Native American reservations. The largest minority populations in North Dakota are individuals who are identified as American Indians, thus enhanced outreach to the reservations was a significant strategy to improve service to minority populations. There are four reservations in North Dakota. The tribal governments for three of those reservations currently receive funding from the Rehabilitation Services Administration for Tribal VR programs. VR has collaborated with tribal VR programs to provide technical assistance, training on specific disability related issues to include assistive technology and service to individuals who experience significant vision and/or hearing loss. Many of the VR counseling staff at the local regions share dual consumers with the tribal programs. The agency intends to increase the percentage of shared cases through identifying measures for the number of shared consumers in recently executed memorandum of understandings. Many of these reservations are located in remote corners of the state and a significant barrier to engaging consumers in VR service is the lack of public or private transportation. To address this issue, VR counseling staffs regularly travel to the reservation to provide state VR service. The VR director provides outreach to the reservations to assess the relationship between the state and tribal VR programs and seek opportunities to increase referrals to the VR program. Upon request, VR offers training and technical assistance to tribal VR in the provision of pre-employment transition service (Pre-ETS).

Two percent of the state's population is comprised of new Americans who are recent immigrants to the United States. A majority of the new Americans come to the state from Philippines, Canada, and Nigeria followed closely by China and India. Further analysis of census data indicates that of these new Americans, 11 percent live below the poverty level.

New Americans often arrive in North Dakota with the support of Lutheran Social Services, an agency that resettles refugees and helps new immigrants get established in the state. The resettlement effort includes partnerships with components of the workforce development system to address the unmet need of this population in securing employment. Partnering with components of the state workforce system, particularly the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) agency, the division ensures new Americans who experience disabilities are referred to VR to address disability-related barriers to employment. Staff in each geographical area communicate on a regular basis and participate in joint training and other networking opportunities that result in referrals between programs.

The agency also collaborates with the North Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS), the designated state agency for the VR program, to identify potential VR consumers. This coordination occurs between VR and the department's other divisions which includes the eight regional human service centers, behavioral health, developmental disability, aging, and children and family services. In addition, regional VR staff outreach to staff of social services offices who administer DHS's economic assistance programs which include Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

VR staff also collaborate with the various homeless shelters, as well as the subsidized housing units built for those who have been homeless, across the state to reach potential consumers who are unserved/underserved.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES)

VR is committed to provide pre-employment transition services to students. Activities include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, training on self-advocacy, counseling on post-secondary opportunities, and workplace readiness training based on individual needs. VR entered into purchase of service agreements with local education agencies to enhance or expand services. The activities include the following:

- Teachers and VR counselors provide co-instruction in local schools to offer students activities surrounding career exploration, self-advocacy, interest testing, and workplace readiness training. Workplace readiness training curriculums were developed by DPI, VR, and other partners through an NTACT TA grant, and are one of many tools that can be used for co-instruction.
- VR and DPI continue to collaborate at a local level with colleges, work force offices, community rehabilitation providers (CRPs), independent living centers, and employers to provide transition fairs. These fairs provide transition students with hands-on opportunities to explore and experience various careers.
- VR and North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind co-sponsored a weekend retreat with the purpose of providing intensive pre-employment career services to youth with visual impairments. Due to the success of this retreat, plans are to continue sponsoring this event.
- ND is involved with the National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes. A VR administrator, along with educators at the state and local level attend the national conference. The partners also joined the state and local communities of practice, so there is a smooth transition for students who are deaf.
- VR is also involved with the ND Dual Sensory Project in which strategies are found to work with individuals with a combined vision and hearing impairment. There are several partners dedicated to this project such as VR, Helen Keller National Center, ND Vision Services/School for the Blind, ND School for the Deaf, and Minot State University.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE

The results of the provider survey conducted with the 2018-2020 Triennial Needs Assessment is discussed in Attachment (j).

VR schedules statewide provider meetings and has one staff assigned part-time to support the collaborative effort of VR and providers to assist VR consumers gain competitive, integrated employment. In 2019, VR researched payment rates and service guidelines from various states; as well as, obtained rate information from North Dakota's Developmental Disabilities division for individual employment services (IES). In October 2019, VR implemented an hourly rate for job development and job coaching services for supported employment and customized employment services.

During the 2019 legislative session, North Dakota lawmakers authorized the Department of Human Services to create a Medicaid 1915(i) state plan amendment, which allows North Dakota

Medicaid to pay for additional home and community-based services to support individuals with specific behavioral health conditions like mental illness, an addiction or a brain injury.

In the fall of 2015, VR began a three-year pilot project. VR established the three-year pilot to gather data, information and best practices the agency would need to consider when developing and implementing customized employment in the state. In addition, the project was designed to build the capacity to deliver customized employment services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities that lead to integrated and competitive employment opportunities for those currently receiving day support and segregated employment services. VR contracted with the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) to coordinate and provide training, in-field mentoring and technical assistance for customized employment training for four CRPs.

In 2018, VR contracted with NDCPD to coordinate training and technical assistance activities for a new cohort of CRPs to begin customized employment training. This cohort would receive two years of training to include webinars, technical assistance and in-field mentoring. VR selected four rural CRPs for the new cohort. Only CRPs who have participated, or who are currently participating, in VR's customized employment training initiative, coordinated through Minot State University, are authorized to provide customized employment. The eight CRPs provide customized employment services in six of eight regions in North Dakota. A customized employment policy and payment rate were developed and implemented in October 2019. In October 2019, VR implemented an outcome-based payment for discovery activities and an hourly rate for job development and job coaching services for customized employment services.

In addition, VR implemented a provider service agreement. The purpose of the certification is to enhance provider training in order for them to better meet individual needs.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

Plans to meet and report on the performance accountability measures found in Section 116 of WIOA include:

- VR works with the core partner programs to receive and report employment data for individuals exiting the VR program who become employed in states other than North Dakota.
- The VR agency is actively working to align and integrate WIOA performance reporting requirements. The scope of this plan is included in the unified section of the state's workforce plan.
- VR closely monitors program data on a quarterly basis. The data is provided on a quarterly basis to RSA who uses the data to develop benchmarks of the VR program's performance.
- VR tracks the employer services as outlined in Attachment 4 of RSA-TAC-17-01, to be combined with data from ND Department of Labor.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The North Dakota Workforce Development Council has been engaged in developing and evaluating the success of strategic workforce planning. The Council conducted a statewide survey which was used in the development of the Workforce Development Strategic Plan and

presented it to the Governor. The Council supports the following strategies which complement existing initiatives or programs and supports expansion of successful employment-based strategies:

- Engage students, parents, educators, schools, and businesses in a comprehensive career planning process.
- Increase stakeholder promotion of and employer use of work-based learning.
- Build partnerships for future workforce needs and opportunities.
- Assess and analyze gaps between labor supply and demand to provide programmatic offerings.

The VR staff has relationships with local Workforce partners. VR is seen as the disability experts. When there is an individual who has a disability and is working with a Workforce partner, VR may be called to open a case. We work collaboratively with individuals who are co-enrolled and provide guidance as to the necessary accommodations or adaptations that may be needed to assist an individual achieve vocational goals.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The goals and strategies below are based on the results of the 2018-2020 Triennial Assessment of Rehabilitation Needs conducted in 2017, public input, federal standards and indicators, recommendations from the SRC and VR's Managing for Results Strategic Planning. They are designed to support achievement of VR's goals and priorities identified in *Attachment (I)*.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

Some strategies support achievement of more than one of VR's goals.

Goal 1: VR will assist 1,100 individuals with disabilities obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment during PY20 and PY21 by June 2022.

Priority 1: To comply with State and Federal regulations.

Priority 2: To provide opportunities for people with disabilities to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment.

Strategy 1.1 *Develop onboarding activities to improve staff engagement and retention.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 1.2 *Utilize training to its maximum capacity for effective staff performance.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 1.3 *Improve outreach to referral sources to increase number of appropriate applicants.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 1.4 *Establish and maintain relationships with employers to assist them with meeting their workforce needs and finding and retaining employees.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Goal 2: VR developed a system to certify eligible individuals for the customized employment state tax credit through April 30, 2021.

Priority 1: To comply with HB 1406 passed in the 2019 State legislative session.

Priority 2: To incentivize employers to hire individuals with the most significant disabilities who require customized employment.

Strategy 2.1 *Provide ongoing education and technical assistance to providers, employers, and staff regarding the tax credit.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 2.2 *Coordinate with the ND Tax Department to provide the number of tax credits utilized to the legislative body.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Goal 3: VR will provide 2,720 services to employers during FFY20 and FFY21 by September 2021.

Priority 1: To comply with Federal regulations.

Priority 2: To provide opportunities for people with disabilities to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment.

Priority 3: To provide education and awareness to employers on the benefits of hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities.

Strategy 3.1 *Participate as a member in business, technical, and professional organizations, such as chambers of commerce, Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), etc.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 3.2 *Attend Workforce Development Council meetings and disseminate information to the statewide VR staff on the business needs as expressed during board meetings.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

Strategy 3.3 *Participate in the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation's National Employment Team (NET) and the NET-Southeast regional team to share referrals and best practices.*

Innovation/enhancement/improvement

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

VR received recommendations from the Washington Initiative on Supported Employment (WISE), North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD), SRC members and through public comment to develop and implement customized employment. North Dakota VR developed a customized employment policy, payment rates for customized employment and

training and technical assistance for CRPs. VR invested and continues to invest in training and technical assistance for CRPs to gain the skills necessary to ensure that customized employment services are available across the state. VR contracted with NDCPD to coordinate training and technical assistance activities for eight CRPs to begin customized employment training. These CRPs received training to include webinars, technical assistance and in-field mentoring. Only CRPs who have participated or who are currently participating in VR's customized employment training initiative, coordinated through Minot State University, are authorized to provide customized employment. The eight CRPs provide customized employment services in six of eight regions in North Dakota.

Notations are made by the goals and/or strategies that include innovation, expansion and improvement of services and/or outreach activities.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

Goal 1: VR will assist 1,200 individuals with disabilities obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment by September 2019.

Priority 1: To comply with State and Federal regulations.

Priority 2: To provide opportunities for people with disabilities to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment.

The total number of successful rehabilitations for federal program year 2018 was 525 and federal program year 2019 was 579 for a total of 1,104 (92% of the goal).

Strategies that impacted the outcome:

- Formulated a committee to establish onboarding activities to decrease staff turnover
- Initiated a succession planning committee to ensure smooth transition after retirements and provided training opportunities for staff members through Emerging Leaders
- VR has business service specialists to provide outreach and services to businesses in all four quadrants of the state. The division has four staff dedicated to providing business service and connecting VR counseling staff with local business to promote employment of persons with disabilities. Monthly meetings occur to work on statewide business engagement strategies.
- Provided presentations and information at the Statewide Governor's Workforce Conference and Statewide Association for Human Resource Managers. Reached an audience of 400 business attendees each of the program years to market the VR program.
- Training of staff in motivational interviewing techniques that serve to engage consumers as active participants in seeking employment.
- The division is a member of the State and Local Chamber of Commerce and participates in activities that serve to build relationships with business and facilitate referral of consumers for employment with these business entities.

- VR staff provide personal assistance to consumers in completion of resumes, teaching interview skills and guiding consumers in completion of on-line applications.
- VR continues a leadership role in the State's Workforce Development Council responsible for the development and evaluation of the State's Workforce Strategic Plan. VR staff working in the agency regional offices have effective regional teams with representatives of the partner agencies as identified in WIOA. These teams are effective in planning joint workforce activities that include career fairs, and discussion on collaboration to provide service to business.

Goal 2: VR will develop IPE's within 90 days from eligibility determination 100% of the time unless there is a signed and approved plan extension.

Priority 1: To comply with State and Federal regulations.

Priority 2: To engage the consumers in the rehabilitation process.

There were 1,241 initial plans completed in FFY2019. There were eight that took more than 90 days to develop, and there was not an extension completed. Of the 1,241 initial plans completed, 1,233 were completed within ninety days from eligibility determination, or had an extension (99.4%).

Strategies that impacted the outcome:

- Developed and implemented an internal control policy to ensure plans are developed within ninety days of eligibility
- Required training on Career Index Plus for all staff to assist in plan development

Goal 3: VR will annually expend no less than the minimum 15% reserve requirement to provide and make available pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for all students with disabilities across the state.

Priority 1: To comply with State and Federal regulations.

Priority 2: To provide opportunities for students with disabilities to explore careers and identify a vocational goal in competitive integrated employment.

This goal was met. During 2018, Pre-ETS expenditures accounted for 19% of the federal grant and in 2019 Pre-ETS expenditures accounted for 21% of the federal grant.

Strategies that impacted the outcome:

- VR provided Pre-ETS services to 2,219 students with disabilities in 2018.
- VR provided Pre-ETS services to 2,485 students with disabilities in 2019.
- VR sets regional office staff time goals and staff track 100% of their time electronically to capture their time spent on Pre-ETS.
- VR has purchase of service agreements with LEAs to provide Pre-ETS services.
- 35% of all applicants for VR services in North Dakota during program year 2018 and 2019 were 21 and under at application. This number demonstrates the agency commitment to outreach to service students with disabilities.

Goal 4: VR will develop and implement a customized employment policy that will result in 16 people obtaining competitive integrated employment within the next two years.

Priority 1: Develop the expertise of community rehabilitation providers to offer high quality supported employment services that lead to competitive, integrated employment.

Priority 2: To provide individuals with the most significant disabilities with the opportunity for competitive integrated employment.

This goal was met. Twenty-nine individuals obtained competitive, integrated employment through customized employment.

Strategies that impacted the outcome:

- *Provided training to VR staff on customized employment*
- *Provided customized employment training and in-field mentoring to eight out of seventeen community rehabilitation providers. Community rehabilitation providers cannot provide customized employment services until they have entered into the training program.*
- *Developed a plan to ensure statewide customized employment service*
- *Developed and established a customized employment policy and payment rate.*

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

- 22% counselor turnover rate in 2018
- 25% counselor turnover rate in 2019
- The North Dakota unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the nation at 2.5%.

2. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS

VR facilitated the Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, which is a subcommittee of the SRC where they promote competitive integrated employment as the first choice for individuals with the most significant disabilities. VR has partnered with eight community providers and provided training by the Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE). So far, 29 of the 57 individuals who have participated in the pilot program have obtained and maintained competitive integrated employment.

The primary supported employment goals identified in Attachment (n) were to provide training and stabilization to an estimated 234 individuals and employ 40 individuals. In 2018, we provided training and stabilization to 288 individuals and 52 individuals became successfully employed. In 2019, we provided training and stabilization to 337 individuals and 76 individuals became successfully employed.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Supported employment is provided to eligible consumers with the most significant disabilities. VR's Title VI, Part B funds are used to provide intensive skills and behavioral training for

consumers in competitive, integrated employment. The challenge for VR is the availability of extended services funds specifically the shortage of state funds available for individuals who have a mental illness, traumatic brain injury, or others who qualify for supported employment but do not have an identified extended services funding source. In addition, there is a lack of rural community rehabilitation providers as well as the willingness for the providers to travel long distances to provide services.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA

The ETA-9169 for PY2018 has the following:

- Employment second quarter after exit rate 61.0
- Employment fourth quarter after exit baseline – Cases closed in PY2017 our preliminary rate is 59.4
- Median earnings second quarter after exit \$4,412.51
- Credential Rate baseline
- Measurable Skill Gains 55.7

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED

During FFY 2018 and 2019, innovation and expansion funds were spent on the following activities:

ADA:

VR continues to participate with on-going education and four staff attended the 2019 National ADA Symposium in Dallas, TX. The regional offices have staff who are trained to support referrals and provide resources to employers and businesses in the community.

Business Services:

I & E funds were used to pay for business, technical, and professional service organization memberships, including Chamber of Commerce, for regional and state VR staff. Funds were also used for booth registration at high-profile regional and state conferences and events. Both allow for higher visibility of VR within the business community and by our individuals. They enable us to develop long-term partnerships with business owners and employers based on common goals, which should enhance recruitment and retention practices benefiting individuals with disabilities. A business service specialist attended The National Employment Team (NET) Summit in Baltimore, MD.

Transition:

VR had transition contracts with local education units where students received Pre-ETS and as a result were able to participate in various work experiences, including job shadows, as well as developing resumes and practicing interviewing skills.

VR partnered with the state education agency in planning and sponsoring the 2019 Secondary Transition Interagency Conference and also sponsored the 2019 Transition and Youth Leadership Conference.

VR supported our transition services program administrator in attending the annual Capacity Building Institute. The program administrator is a member of the ND team represented by Vocational Rehabilitation, our State Education Agency, a parent of a child with a disability and a Certified Rehabilitation Provider.

State Rehabilitation Council:

Funds were used to provide travel and per diem to SRC members.

Statewide Independent Living Council:

Funds were used to provide travel and per diem to SILC members.

Assistive Technology:

The Department of Human Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation controls and administers the funds made available through the federal Tech Act Grant and awards these federal grant funds to Assistive. The Vocational Rehabilitation Director or designee is a member of the Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) for the Tech Act Grant. Assistive has a certification process for newly hired staff. Certified AT specialists employed at Assistive are, in addition to their primary work duties, spending time to develop the knowledge and skill set of newly hired AT specialist staff. The process of training can take up to 18 months. This process was developed due to a lack of educational opportunities in the state of North Dakota to produce trained AT specialists

Customized Employment:

VR contracted with Minot State University to coordinate and provide training and technical assistance and project management for customized employment training to include the Discovery Process for community rehabilitation providers and vocational rehabilitation staff throughout the state of North Dakota.

Q. QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

1. THE QUALITY, SCOPE, AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES

Supported employment services are available to individuals with the most significant disabilities in all disability categories including developmental disabilities, severe mental illness, traumatic brain injury, and physical disabilities. Services are provided by 20 providers. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) projects to serve 340 individuals with the most significant disabilities, in competitive integrated employment placements.

Individuals with the most significant disabilities will be served and outcomes achieved through the implementation of the following activities:

- Continued education and awareness activities for the business community, lawmakers, service providers, educators, family members, and the general public.
- Targeting supported employment as an outcome for students with the most severe disabilities transitioning from school to work through regional transition services.
- Coordination of the departments, agencies, divisions, organizations and programs whose activities have a direct impact on supported employment services.
- Identification of training and technical assistance needs based on provider outcome data.
- Continue to require licensing for all supported employment providers which will include accreditation by a national accrediting body.
- Continue to have semi-annual meetings with providers to provide technical assistance and training.
- Continue to work with extended services funding sources to ensure individuals can utilize supported employment and access supports once the VR case is closed.

Supported employment training is provided up to 24 months, unless more time is necessary for the client. In order to ensure continuity and a smooth transition, documentation must demonstrate that the individual meets the criteria for transitioning to extended services.

Individuals, once employed, begin the training piece of supported employment through the assistance of the individual's job coach. The job coach will provide training to the employer and the individual on job tasks, reasonable accommodations, and how to ensure the individual has the skills necessary to perform the work tasks, as independently as possible. The VR counselor must visit the individual at the employment site within 30 days of the individual becoming employed. The visit is coordinated with the community rehabilitation provider (CRP). Further visits will occur based on individual or employer needs.

2. THE TIMING OF TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES

Stabilization is the expected point of transition to extended services. Individuals are considered stabilized in employment if:

- all support needs have been addressed and necessary modifications or accommodations have been made at the worksite;
 - the individual is satisfied with the type of work;
 - the individual is satisfied with the overall number of hours worked per week;
 - the individual is working to one's maximum ability, as independently as possible;
 - the individual and employer agree that the person is performing the job, and meeting expectations of employment; and
 - the individual has reached a consistent intervention rate.
- **Transfer to extended services**

- Prior to transitioning to extended services the VR counselor will schedule a team meeting. The team, which includes the extended services funder, must concur that the individual is stable in the job.
- The VR counselor and extended services funder will identify the date the case will be transferred from VR to extended services.
- The VR counselor will notify the individual and CRP with the projected date the individual will be ready to transfer to extended services.
- The VR counselor will review the CRP progress report until the case can be closed to ensure the individual remains stable in a job and address any concerns that may arise.
- The individual must be in extended services for a minimum of 90 days prior to case closure.

In the spirit of Employment First and the need for competitive integrated employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities working for sub-minimum wage or in sheltered employment, VR piloted a three year Expanded Supported Employment Project, which began in 2015 and ended in September 2018. The project outcomes will influence amendments to SE policies, practices, guidelines and payment rates; as well as assist in the development of a customized employment policy, guidelines and payment rate.

Contracts were awarded to four community rehabilitation providers who had applied for the opportunity. VR has contracted the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) who issued a subcontract with the Washington Initiative on Supported Employment (WISE) to provide intensive on-site training and will also be available for technical assistance and individualized coaching for employment specialists throughout the three-year project. In 2016, 2017 and 2018, the VR program administrator completed site visits with each of the four community providers to collect data. In 2016, there were 18 participants in the pilot project, and 16% of these participants were employed in competitive integrated employment positions. In 2017, there were 43 participants in the pilot project and 61% of these participants were employed in competitive integrated employment positions. When the pilot ended in September 2018, 57 individuals were enrolled in the customized employment pilot. Through the customized employment pilot, 29 individuals became employed in competitive integrated employment. The average hourly wage of individuals before participating in VR's customized employment pilot was \$5.06, and after becoming employed in a competitive integrated employment position the average hourly wage was \$9.17.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL) CERTIFICATIONS

1. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE,) IS AUTHORIZED TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (REHABILITATION ACT), AS AMENDED BY WIOA[14], AND ITS SUPPLEMENT UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT[15];

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS APPROPRIATE

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

2. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES, THE (ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY)[16] AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[17] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[18] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION 111 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

ENTER THE NAME OF DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY

North Dakota Department of Human Services

3. AS A CONDITION FOR THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AGREES TO OPERATE AND ADMINISTER THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN[19] , THE REHABILITATION ACT, AND ALL APPLICABLE REGULATIONS[20] , POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION. FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI ARE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN;

4. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND/OR THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO PERFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE REGARDING THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

5. THE STATE LEGALLY MAY CARRY OUT EACH PROVISION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

6. ALL PROVISIONS OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT ARE CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW.

7. THE (ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER STATE LAW TO RECEIVE, HOLD, AND DISBURSE FEDERAL FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT;

ENTER THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

8. THE (ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW) HAS THE AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND THE SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;

ENTER THE TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE BELOW

Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

9. THE AGENCY THAT SUBMITS THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT HAS ADOPTED OR OTHERWISE FORMALLY APPROVED THE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT.

FOOTNOTES

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Signatory information	Enter Signatory information in this column
Name of Signatory	Robyn Throlson
Title of Signatory	Interim Director, NDVR
Date Signed	February 24, 2020

ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include	Include
1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.	
2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.	
3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:	
3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):	
3.b.(A) "is an independent State commission" (Yes/No)	No
3.b.(B) "has established a State Rehabilitation Council" (Yes/No)	Yes
3.c. Consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.d. The financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying	

The State Plan must include	Include
out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3)	
3.e. The local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)	No
3.f. The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No)	No
3.g. Statewide and waivers of statewide requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewide for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan	No
3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.k. The compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
3.l. The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities	
3.m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:	
4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for	No

The State Plan must include	Include
services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)	
4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act	
4.i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs	
4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,	
4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,	
4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and	
4.j.i.II. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and	
4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))	
5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:	
5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act	
5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that	

The State Plan must include	Include
is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act	
6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:	
6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act	
6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act	
7. Provision of Supported Employment Services:	Yes
7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b. The designated State agency assures that:	
7.b.i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act	
7.b.ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act	

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	23.4	49.0	23.4	50.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR APPENDIX

ALL WIOA CORE PROGRAMS

All WIOA Core Programs

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹ *“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

ADDITIONAL INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Additional Indicators of Performance
No additional indicators.